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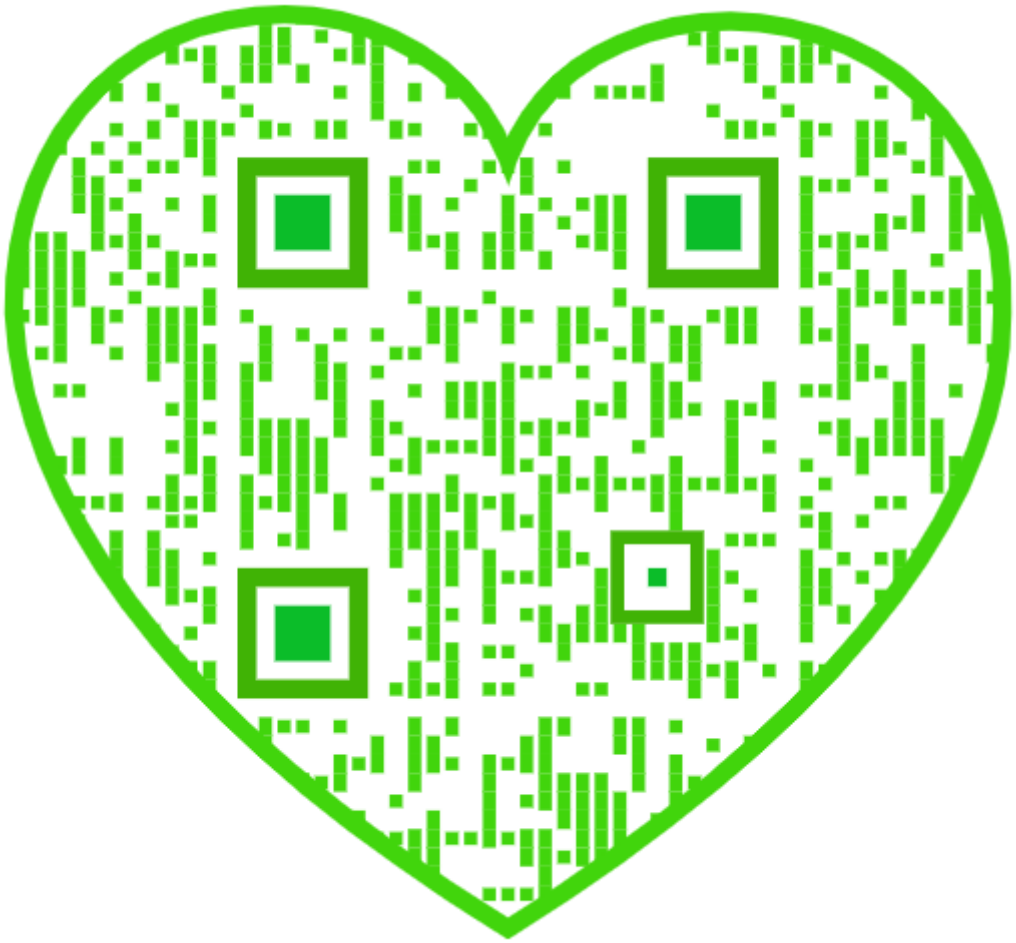

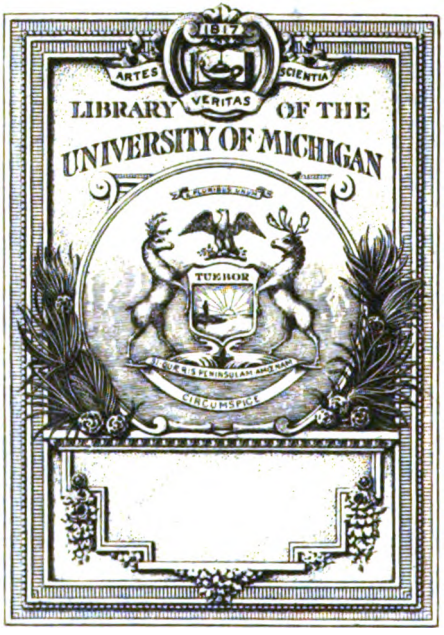

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JAPANESE ILLUSTRATION

A HISTORY OF THE ARTS OF WOOD-CUTTING AND COLOUR PRINTING IN JAPAN

By EDWARD F. STRANGE, M.J.S.

LONDON: GEORGE BELL AND SONS
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DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO

H. E. THE JAPANESE MINISTER,

TAKAAKI KATO,

PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN SOCIETY, ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

DURING the last twenty years such Europeans as are interested in art have gradually become alive to the fact that there has existed in Japan, for upwards of two centuries, a school of woodcut illustration on somewhat different lines to that of their own part of the world, but often its superior in both technical and artistic results.

The growth of this knowledge is interesting, and a short sketch thereof may serve as a fitting introduction to a study of the art itself.

In 1812, died at Paris M. Isaac Titsingh, who for fourteen years served the Dutch East India Company as chief of their settlement at Nagasaki. During this time he had been at some pains to acquire all possible information as to the arts, sciences and industries of the Japanese; and, moreover, to illustrate his knowledge by many documents. A catalogue of the latter will be found at the end of the posthumous compilation of his essays and translations, published in French by M. Nepveu, and in

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English by Ackermann (1822), wherein, among sundry maps, books, and paintings, are noted, together with several other items of a similar nature:

"Nine engravings printed in colours, on the same number of separate sheets, 10 inches wide and 1 foot 2 inches 9 lines in height, representing Japanese ladies in various dresses."

Now this interesting record probably entitles M. Titsingh to the honour of having been the earliest European collector of Japanese colour-prints, and their nature may be suggested by another estray of evidence which comes to us from a Japanese source, to the effect that the productions of Utamaro were especially prized by Dutchmen.

With the exception of the reproduction of four colour-prints[1] in Oliphant's "Account of the Mission of Lord Elgin to China and Japan" (1859), and the reproduction of some of Hokusai's woodcuts in one of the early volumes of "Once a Week," no further attention seems to have been paid to the subject until the International Exhibition of 1862, in which the Japanese collection made by Sir Rutherford Alcock excited much wonder and admiration among those interested in the arts. Mr. John Leighton, in a lecture at the Royal Institution, delivered

[1] Two by Toyokuni II. (Kunisada), and one each by Hiroshige I. and II.

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on the 1st of May, 1863, pointed out the marvellous skill shown in wood-engraving and colour printing; and the rare pamphlet in which he afterwards embodied his views, is illustrated by a coarsely-printed sheet from the set of the Forty-seven Rōnin by Kunisada. His criticisms seem to show that he was quite unacquainted with the best work now known to us; and it is probable that the exhibits displayed on this occasion, as well as those at the Paris Exhibition of 1867, were for the most part of the debased and deteriorated kind then current at Yedo and Osaka. But the revolution of 1868 attracted a number of highly educated Europeans to Japan. It was impossible that many of them should not be impressed by the beauty and novelty of the better class of prints; and as they have gradually returned to this country, bringing with them fine specimens of the earlier and better classes of work, a new cult of collectors has arisen, the objects of whose reverence charm as much by their intrinsic worth as by their half-hidden mystery and romance.

Of late years the exhibition of the Burlington Fine Arts Club (1888), and those at other galleries have advanced the knowledge of this craft another step, while the great success which has followed the establishment of the Japan Society is a sufficient indication of the keenness with which a large public is now prepared to interest

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itself in almost any of the delightful arts of that country.

It is a little difficult to state in precise language the causes of the charm these prints have for such as have learnt the elements of their language. As mere arrangements of decorative colour they are generally superb: as exercises in composition they are, in the aggregate, unsurpassed. But they at first strike an outsider with something of a shock. They are so different —so rebellious. Since the Gothic period, Western Art has lost its taste for—even its understanding of—convention. The Renaissance was a struggle in the direction of realism; carried on at first by men of great manipulative skill. It failed because its artists knew not the limits of their power. And the failure was so magnificent that it bound and blinded European Art with its traditions, even unto this day. Now the Japanese artist is not concerned with unnecessary accuracy. When he chooses, he can—as in the drawings of birds and flowers—attain a realism far beyond that ever achieved by his Western brethren. But when he has a tale to tell, whether it be of the passions or follies of men, of the quaint inanity of the professional beauty, of the tenderness of evening light, every consideration is sacrificed thereto. He does not call you away from his subject at every point to stay and wonder at his drawing.

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He does not deem it needful to cover every square inch of his panel with a mere padding of colour or the distraction of unnecessary and irritating detail. Nothing is allowed that can interfere with the intense presentment of one central idea, in such a manner that it shall dominate your thoughts to the exclusion of all else. And yet, not content with the limitations of a most difficult technique, he adds thereto conventions of incredible effrontery. He persuades you into unabashed acceptance of postulates which overturn every article in the artistic creed of your forefathers; and smilingly imposes his fictions on you by the perfect truth of the sentiment they convey.

It would be unwise to pass over in silence the use that has been, and still is, made of the colour prints. They have been recognized for some years as the source of inspiration of much that is newest and best in landscape art; but perhaps their most valuable influence is only to-day in the infancy of its development. Every broadsheet with a theatrical subject is a potential poster. Steinlen, Ibels, Lautrec, have already discovered this, and they have been good enough to pass on the hint to our artists in England, with what results the hoardings already show.

There is no adequate reason why Europeans should not avail themselves of these treasures lying thus ready to their hands.

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On the contrary, the layman, welcoming a change from the inevitable, as it seemed, stupidity or vulgarity of the old advertisement, will rather rejoice that the prophets of his culture have aptitude—even generosity—to admit influences tending so pleasantly to his gratification; and it is indubitable that he has to thank the humble artizans of the Land of the Rising Sun for many a quaint conceit of design, and many a happy coincidence of colour, now pleasantly translated to the service of our city walls.

* * * * * *

A personal note must be added on the circumstances attending the compilation of the present volume. It has been rendered difficult by the failure of anticipated help from Japan; and, again, easier by the discovery, nearer home, of much information that was needed. And there now remains only the pleasant duty of publicly confessing the obligations which many kind friends have laid upon me. All lovers of Japanese pictorial art are under an inestimable debt to Professor Anderson. It has been impossible for me, as it will be for any future writer on the subject, to avoid quoting him at almost every turn; and in acknowledging the use I have made of the priceless stores of information he has accumulated for the benefit of the world, I would add thereto

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an expression of my thanks for the personal courtesy with which he has placed them at my disposal.

To supplement the facts derived from his works, I have had recourse to the monographs on Utamaro and Hokusai by Mons. E. de Goncourt, whose death, full of years and honours, we have only lately to deplore; to the publications of Mons. Bing in "Artistic Japan" and elsewhere; to information most freely given by my friend Mr. Edgar Wilson, whose collection of colour-prints is one of the best in England; and to translations made for me from Japanese authorities by Mr. Genjirō Kowaki and Mr. H. O. Tanosuke. From Mr. Charles Holme, Mr. Edgar Wilson, and Mr. Arthur Morrison I have received cordial permission to reproduce examples not otherwise easily attainable, and the authorities of South Kensington Museum have given me the same privilege. I am, moreover, indebted to Mr. L. W. Micheletti, of the National Art Library, for a great deal of valuable assistance in the collection and arrangement of my materials. The two blocks on pp. 5 and 9 are reproduced by the permission of Professor Anderson and Messrs. Seeley and Co., Ltd., from the "Portfolio"[1] monograph on Japanese Wood Engravings" by the former.

There have, as I have said, been many

[1] No. 17, May, 1895.

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difficulties to contend with in the preparation of this work, and these must excuse the imperfections which an increase of general knowledge of the subject will inevitably bring to light. The men who made the colour prints which form the main object of my essay were but artisans, and no one deemed it necessary to preserve the details of lives so low down in the social scale of Japan. There are few native treatises dealing with the subject, and those have been available for me only through the medium of the translator. The one possible method of dealing with the little information at hand has been to test it with the evidence of one's eyes, and set it down for what it is worth, in the hope that it may at least furnish definite grounds for the labours of future writers. But if I have succeeded in interesting a public in one of the most charming and most artistically valuable of the handicrafts, I shall have attained the only ambition I proposed to myself in undertaking the task, and so shall rest content.

EDWARD F. STRANGE.

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JAPANESE ILLUSTRATION.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY ILLUSTRATED BOOKS.

For the beginnings of book illustration in Japan, we have to look, as in the case of the other arts of the Land of the Rising Sun, to China. Not directly, however, for the Buddhist missionaries, who took with them traditions of the Græco-Buddhistic arts of India into every country whither they penetrated, came to Japan by way of Korea, and so added another influence to an already somewhat conglomerate legend.

Block-printing seems to have existed in China in the fourth century[1] A.D.; but the earliest specimens of the art attributable to Japan are ascribed to the period A.D. 764-770, when the Empress Shiyau-toku "in pursuance of a vow, ordered a million small wooden toy pagodas to be made for distribution among the Buddhist temples and monasteries of the whole country, each of

[1] "*Hiang-liang*, styled *Kiu-to*, first printed books about A.D. 330 at Tcheng-tu."—TERRIEN DE LACOUPERIE, "Origin of Chinese Civilization," 1894, p. 345.

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which was to contain a *dhârani* out of the Buddhist Scripture, entitled 'Vimala nirbhasa Sûtra.'"[1] These texts, many specimens of which are said to be still extant, were printed on paper eighteen inches in length by two in width, either from wood or metal plates; and although a number of these examples are forgeries, it seems certain that enough are genuine to establish the authenticity of the statement.

We may shortly summarize the history of Japanese printing so far as it relates to our subject. In A.D. 987, the term *suri-hon*, "printed book," is used. In A.D. 1172 appeared an edition of the "Seventeen Laws," "which is the earliest Japanese printed book of which any record exists."[2] Other religious publications appear at rare intervals during the next two centuries, together with some few rude woodcuts; but mentioning the earliest known Chinese illustrated book, the "Kwanyin Sutra" (A.D. 1331), and the Korean books of the fifteenth century, we may at once pass to a romance, the "Isé Monogatari," which at present appears to be the earliest Japanese book of purely native style and origin. It was published in A.D. 1608.

Illustrated books are henceforward found in ever-increasing numbers, but as a rule

[1] SATOW (E.), "On the Early History of Printing in Japan."—Asiatic Soc. of Japan, Trans., Dec., 1881.
[2] *Ibid.*

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of mediocre merit. In many cases, also, they are embellished with crude colour,

DESIGN FOR A KIMONO, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

applied invariably by hand. But in 1667 there appeared an anonymous collection, in several volumes, of designs for *kimono*

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(the outer garment), which not only shows many of the best characteristics of Japanese ornament, but often reaches a very fair standard of executive skill. It has, in addition, the interest of having been printed in at least four colours, neither superimposed nor in any case used together, but employed in turn for the two designs cut on each block in order to give variety to the general effect of the book, the first couple being in black, the second in olive-green, the third in red, and so on (p. 3). The importance of this seems to lie in the fact that, although a knowledge of the use of coloured inks for printing was thus contemporary with the desire for woodcut illustrations in more than one colour, the earliest known book actually illustrated with chromo-xylographs should not have appeared until A.D. 1748. It seems almost certain, however, that now Japanese art is being more closely and scientifically studied, some intermediate link will be discovered other than that afforded by the broadsheets, to which allusion will presently be made.

But the end of the seventeenth century was destined to see the dawn of a new era; and it is at this point that for all practical purposes the history of wood-engraving in Japan really begins.

Hishikawa Moronobu (Kichibei), the earliest Japanese artist directly connected with book illustration, is said to have been

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SCENE WITH THE DIVINITIES DAIKOKU AND EBISU. BY HISHIKAWA MORONOBU (C. 1680).

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a native of Hoda, in Bōshiu. He was the son of a celebrated embroiderer, Michishige, and in his youth learned the practice of his father's craft, and also to design for it. In early life, however, he left Yasuda, in the province of Awa, where he was then living, to carry on his trade at Yedo; but, having already developed an aptitude for painting, he gradually devoted himself entirely to the finer art. In this new pursuit, being self-taught, he, perhaps naturally, adopted the style and tenets of the *Ukiyo-ye*, or Popular School, founded by the painter Iwasa Matahei at the end of the sixteenth century; and, devoting himself especially to the illustration of books, exercised an enormous influence on the future of that art. In his old age he renounced the world, and taking the new name of Yuchiku, shaved his head as was the custom of professed recluses. He died in the period Shōtoku (A.D. 1711-15), aged about seventy.

"As an artist," says Professor Anderson, in the British Museum Catalogue of Japanese Pictorial Art, "the vigorous individuality manifested in all his designs, his refined sense of colour, and his wide range of motive, signalize him as one of the most striking figures in the history of his school. He moreover led the way for his successors in the *Ukiyo-ye*, not only as an exponent of contemporary life, but in the interpretation of fiction, poetry, and senti-

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ment, and his works are free from the vulgarity that tainted the productions of many of the best representatives of the school in later times." He devoted himself chiefly to illustrations of the amusements of the upper classes, and the fidelity with which he has treated their costume and other accessories gives his work as high a value to the antiquarian, as does the brilliancy of his composition and drawing to the art-lover.

Moronobu's style is distinguished by its simplicity and caligraphic excellence of line. For the faces of his women, he makes use of a pleasing if conventional type, rounder and fuller than those in vogue later on, and with a characteristic treatment of the looped-up hair of the period. His men are generally studies from real types, and display much animation and character.

Moronobu left two sons of repute. The eldest, Morofusa, abandoned the calling of an artist for that of a dyer; the second, Moronaga, is said to have especially excelled in colouring prints, and it is to him, perhaps, that the completion of some of the chromo-xylographs, undoubtedly designed by his father, may be attributed. One of these can now be seen in the collection at South Kensington Museum. It was published at Miyako about the middle of the eighteenth century.

It is necessary to exercise caution in

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selecting examples of the work of Hishikawa Moronobu, for his name was used by a later artist, who also worked in his style.[1]

The next book illustrator to whom reference should be made is Okumura Masanobu, a contemporary and follower of Moronobu, who also "made[2] a speciality of the 'Yehon,' or picture book pure and simple, albums of pictures without any pretence of text beyond a short marginal script." He worked in the same style as Moronobu during the period 1690-1720. Other names used by him were Bunkaku, Hōgetsudō, Tanchō, and O Genroku.

Confining our attention in the present chapter to those artists only who devoted themselves mainly to book illustration in black and white, we may now pass to Tachibana Morikuni, who was born in 1670, and died at the age of seventy-eight in 1748. Our illustration (p. 10) is from the "Yehon Kojidan," published at Osaka in 1714, and is therefore a specimen of Morikuni's earliest style. It represents Rōkō, one of the Buddhist *Sennin* or *Rishi*—beings who, by the exercise of religious virtues, have attained immortality; and for a slight design has a wonderful effect of atmosphere and motion. Morikuni was trained in the style of the Kano school,

[1] ANDERSON (W.), Portfolio Monograph, "Japanese Wood Engravings." [2] *Ibid.*

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THE THREE SAKI TASTERS. BY OKUMURA MASANOBU (C. 1710).

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but abandoned it for that of the *Ukiyo-ye*. He published a large number of illustrated books of design, plant form, and illustrations to poems, legends, etc., and left a son named Hōkoku, or Yasukuni. We give (p. 11) an example of his treatment of the

RŌKŌ. BY TACHIBANA MORIKUNI (1714).

figure from a book of drawing lessons, "Yehon Oshukubai," published at Naniwa (Osaka) in 1740, which also contains some fine studies of birds and illustrations of heroes of Japanese history, drawn with singular force and dramatic power; while on p. 13 is a superb example from the "Yehon Shahōtai" of the art of juggling with the simple line, which has ever since

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been so characteristic of Japanese draughtsmen.

TWO LADIES. BY TACHIBANA MORIKUNI (1740).

Of the numerous artists whose works belong to this period, we have space only

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for a detailed account of one, Nishikawa Ukiyo Sukenobu, who was born at Kyōto in 1671. He was trained as a figure painter by Kano Yeino; but, like Morikuni, abandoning the traditions of the school of his master, adopted the new art of designing for woodcuts, fixing his residence in Osaka. A large number of books illustrated by him were published both during his life and after his death; which latter occurred in 1751, in his eighty-first year. His woodcuts do not seem to have ever been printed in colour.

Sukenobu must be considered as one of the leading book illustrators of Japan. His range is narrow, but within its limits he attains a very high order of excellence. The peculiar grace with which he invests his female figures is quite his own; and the latter, as Professor Anderson says, "were devoid, both of the exaggerations of traits seen in the works of the later Popular School and of the shapelessness and inanity which appears to have represented the older artists' ideal of beauty; but, unfortunately, these charming little specimens of Japanese girlhood were almost all alike, and hardly displayed more individuality than the ladies in a Paris fashion-plate."[1] Sukenobu wrote a volume of illustrated legends, the "Yehon Yamato Hiji" (1716), the rest of the books containing his designs being generally col-

[1] ANDERSON, British Museum Catalogue, p. 340.

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lections of poems, amusements of women, social treatises, etc. His composition is always masterly, his lines delicate and expressive, and the spotting of solid black

BY TACHIBANA MORIKUNI.

placed with rare reticence and judgment. Such foliage or plant form as he needs is treated with care and accuracy, as also is the drapery of his figures. These latter, indeed, must be compared with similar subjects by Suzuki Harunobu (Chap. III.); the

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resemblance is so strong that one is bound to consider it, although there seems to be no historical link of evidence to directly connect the two men. Sukenobu is quoted by Japanese connoisseurs of art as a rare instance of refinement in the Popular School. He occasionally signed his work Bunkwadō and Jitokusai; and among the engravers who collaborated with him may be mentioned Fujimura Zenyeimon, Murakami Genyeimon, and Niwa Shōbei.

Our illustration (p. 15) is from a book dealing with a subject much patronised by Japanese illustrators—the "Occupations of Women," published in 1729;[1] in the original it occupies, in accordance with a custom quite incomprehensible to Europeans, two separate sheets of the volume.

On p. 17 is an example of the work of Ichi-ō Shumboku, who is particularly notable for a series of reproductions of famous pictures by Chinese and Japanese artists, translated into black and white with great daring and freedom. These subjects are always in great vogue among practitioners of the different crafts, especially those of lacquer and pottery; and the collections of Ichi-ō have been reprinted even so lately as in 1887. The plate we reproduce is from the "Wakan Meihitsu Yehon Tekagami," first printed at Osaka in 1720. Ichi-ō is said to have died at the age of eighty-four;

[1] In the collection of Mr. R. Phené Spiers, F.R.I.B.A.

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NISHIKAWA SUKENOBU

ILLUSTRATION FROM THE "OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN."

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ICHI-Ō SHUMBOKU

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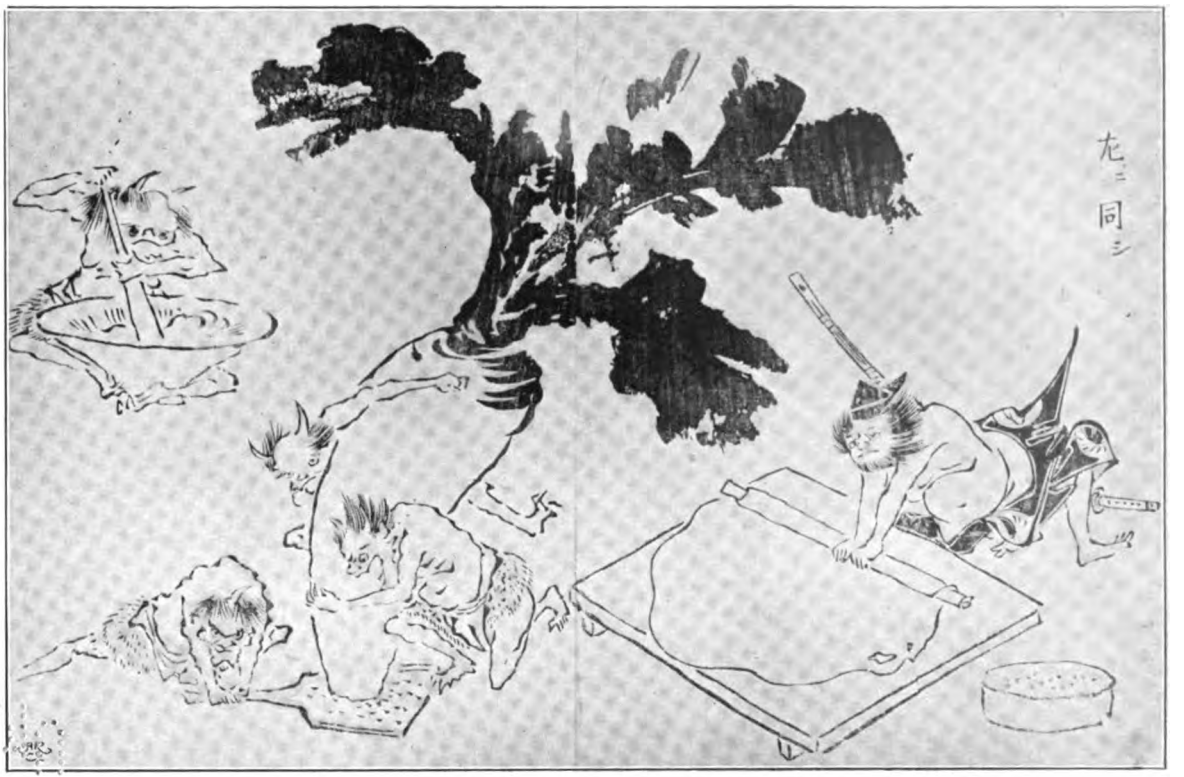

DEMONS ENGAGED IN CULINARY OPERATIONS.

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as one of his books, "Wakan Meigwayen," was issued by him at the age of sixty-one,

BY TSUKIOKA TANGE (1762).

in 1749-50, this would place the date of his death at 1773 or thereabouts. Our second example is reproduced from vol. vi. of this work.

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On p. 19 is an example from the "Tōgoku Meishōshi," one of the popular guide books which are referred to at fuller length in the chapter on landscape. The artist Tsukioka Tange (1717-86) has a reputation for historical figures, and, as the illustration shows, very considerable skill in delineating movement. The book from which our example is taken was engraved by Yoshimi Niyeimon, and published in 1762.

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CHAPTER II.

THE BEGINNING OF COLOUR-PRINTING.

As we have already hinted, colour-printing in Japan is a development of the inclination, quite natural in a society which already possessed an established art of painting, to apply colour by hand to impressions from woodcuts taken in black and white. Examples of this process occur in the seventeenth century; but in the early part of the eighteenth it was used with much skill in the broadsheets, especially by one artist, Torii Kiyonobu, the contemporary and equal of Moronobu.

Kiyonobu, whose personal name was Shōbei, was a resident first of Kyōto, and afterwards of Yedo; he was born in 1688, and flourished 1710-1730. An example of his style of drawing will be well seen at p. 22, a woodcut coloured by hand, representing a young noble and his lady-love. The strong, simple treatment will readily be noticed, as well as a certain rudeness in the ornamental details of the robes, especially

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the fret on the man's garment and the floral pattern (probably the *kiri* or *paulovnia japonica*) on that of the woman. The seal is perhaps that of the engraver, and may be read *Ise-ya*.

In this print but one block was used, opaque colours being painted on the finished impression with the brush. But to Kiyonobu is generally given the credit of having been the first artist to use more than one block in the production of broadsheets. Those so made by him have three colours only, black, green, and rose-pink, the latter, as a rule, faded to a faint brown. But the technique of them is too good not to suggest an earlier date of origin. Mr. Satow,[1] indeed, says: "Printing in colours appears to be nearly two centuries old. Sakakibara attributes its origin to the year 1695, when portraits of the actor Ichikaha Dañ-zhifurau (Ichikawa Danjiurō), coloured by this means, were sold in the streets of Yedo for five cash apiece." These, by the way, are actually attributed to Kiyonobu. In addition there is a tradition, quoted by Professor Anderson, to the effect that, "The first application of the process in Japan is said to have been by one Idzumiya Gonshirō, who lived at the end of the seventeenth century, and made use of a second block to stamp certain parts of his design with *béni*, a red colour

[1] SATOW. "History of Printing in Japan." Asiatic Soc. of Japan, Trans. Dec. 15th, 1881.

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TORII KIYONOBU

TWO LOVERS.

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extracted from a kind of safflower." This method of printing persisted until well into the middle of the century. The Louvre includes in the small but choice collection exhibited in the Salle Grandidier a fine print by Koriusai in this manner. But at the same time it is to be noted that the *printing* of the red must by no means be always taken for granted. Often it is laid on by hand. A good example of a printed broadsheet in three colours by Torii Kiyonobu is reproduced by M. Bing in "Artistic Japan," No. 29.

Kiyonobu founded a school, the members of which followed a custom usual among Japanese artists, of taking a syllable of his name as part of their own. Thus we have Kiyomasu, Kiyotsune, Kiyoshige, Kiyoharu, Kiyonaga, Kiyomitsu, and Kiyomine. Other artists who are also to be dealt with as falling more or less within the influence of the Torii School are Nishimura Shigenaga and Suzuki Harunobu. In no case have we overmuch biographical information available; but several of these artists display either distinction or development which is worth noting, and as far as possible they will therefore be dealt with in chronological order.

Torii Kiyomasu and Kondō Sukegoro Kiyoharu followed Kiyonobu, of whom the former is said to have been a son. Their work is placed in the second quarter of the

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eighteenth century. It consisted chiefly of theatrical prints, and, in the case of the latter, some book illustration; but specimens are rarely met with.

Torii Kiyomitsu was the son of Kiyomasu, and worked about 1750. M. Bing has reproduced in "Artistic Japan" (No. 3) a portrait of the actor Tomedjuro Nakamura in the part of the nun Kaishi. We also give an example of a woman at tea; but this print is certainly of later date, and would lead us to expect that Kiyomitsu was working certainly in 1780. It has a certain severity of treatment which is not unattractive, and which seems characteristic of this artist.

Kiyotsune is of about the same period as Kiyomitsu, but our illustration (p. 26) is much earlier in date than that of the latter, and superior to it in grace. The drapery is well managed; but the extreme attenuation of the hands and feet amounts to a fault. The method of dressing the hair is a fair evidence of early date. In the original the colour is very fine, and, in spite of the defect we have pointed out, the general result quite good. Kiyotsune also executed some book illustrations, notably a set of the Chinese "Twenty-four Examples of Filial Piety," the figures of which are open to the same objection as our illustration. The first of the series contains one of those marvellous elephants that the Japanese have

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TORII KIYOMITSU

WOMAN AT TEA.

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KITAO SHIGEMASA

ILLUSTRATION TO A STORY.

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evolved partly from Chinese tradition and partly from their own imaginations.

Kitao Shigemasa, called also Kosiusai, has much in common with the last-named artist. His treatment of drapery and composition are perhaps better, but he also fails curiously in the management of the anatomy of his figures. The illustration at p. 26 is one of his earlier works, and should perhaps be dated between 1760 and 1770. In the collection at the National Art Library is a fine later example of printing from four blocks, in black, red, green and purple, which has less of what we may call the style of book illustration; and, by its bold, yet graceful arrangement, foreshadows much of the best work done by the next generation of artists. Shigemasa illustrated a book in three volumes, *Yehon Komagadake:* "Famous Horses of Japan and China, with their owners." The copy referred to is dated 1802, but it may not be a first edition. He died in 1819 at the age of eighty. Another artist made use of his name about 1865-75; but the difference of treatment and style is of course so obvious as to prevent any possibility of confusion.

It is advisable here to go back a little in date, in order to mention a contemporary of Kiyonobu, Nishimura Shigenaga. Of him Professor Anderson says: "Many portraits of actors and women, printed from four blocks, after his designs, appeared between

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1716 and 1748, and under his auspices some advance was made in the art of chromo-xylography." Shigenaga was the master of Ishikawa Toyonobu, who died in 1789, and also of Suzuki Harunobu, who had a notable share in the further development of the art (Chap. III.).

The two remaining artists of the Torii School, Kiyomine and Kiyonaga, belong in style and period to a later generation. Kiyonaga was a pupil of Kiyomitsu, and worked after 1765. As a boy he was called Shinsuki, his personal name being Seikiuji Ichibei; he was the son of a publisher, Shirokiya Ichibei. He illustrated several books, from one of which we reproduce a specimen in colours (Plate I.), and he also executed a number of broadsheets of high excellence. From the purely artistic standpoint, Kiyonaga must be looked on as the greatest of his School. His drawing is almost free from the errors of his predecessors; his grace and delicacy in no way inferior. He, too, was the first of the Torii to go beyond the theatrical print, and illustrate subjects from domestic life. The faces of the subjects depicted by him are full of expression; and, allowing for technical conventions, may be truly said to be quite realistic. An important print in the National Art Library is worth referring to here. It is a representation of a gorgeously attired Yoshiwara woman, Segawa, of the

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House called Matsubaya, with the two attendants due to her rank. The impression[1] is a very fine one, on specially thick paper, and it bears an impressed seal reading *Yeijudo of Yedo*, which is that of the publisher. This seal is also found on a print by Yeishi (p. 56); on the early prints of "Fish" by Hiroshige I.; on Hokusai's "Famous Bridges and Waterfalls" (1826-30); and on a print by Kiyomine (not that herein reproduced). The evidence of seals is one on which too much reliance may be placed; but it is worth more attention than it has hitherto received. In this case the period covered by the use of the seal in question is too wide for the assertion of any theory, but it furnishes a suggestive scrap of evidence as to the age of the "Fish" of Hiroshige I. Kiyonaga died between 1804 and 1817.

Kiyomine (Shōnosuke) married the only daughter of Kiyomitsu, and was a pupil of Kiyonaga. He worked in the style of Toyokuni I. during the period Bunkwa (1804-17), and was still alive in Tempō 1830-43, when he for a time used the name of his father-in-law, Kiyomitsu. He equals Kiyonaga in fineness of drawing and design; but has not, however, the realistic qualities of the former artist, his tendency being rather towards the type — more of an abstraction — afterwards

[1] Reference number in Library Catalogue, J4889.

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developed by Utamaro and Yeizan. The original of our illustration [1] at p. 28 has the rare quality of having the outlines of the flesh printed in red; examples of this practice are also known among the work of Utamaro. The thickly-cut cypher is the trade-mark of the shop where the print was sold; the seal underneath it that of the publisher. The subject of the print is the portrait of a girl of the Yoshiwara kissing a letter containing an invitation to the theatre.

The importance of the Torii School must be considered to rest, in its earlier stages at all events, on an archæological rather than an artistic foundation. Not that the work produced by its chief members was inartistic, or of any other than a high order of excellence. But its merits are quite overshadowed by the historic importance of the gradual progress made from the hand-coloured broadsheets and those in two or three tints only, by Kiyonobu, to the splendid chromo-xylographs of Kiyonaga and Kiyomine, which, if not technically unequalled, are at all events unexcelled. The latter artists had to compete with many contemporaries of equal talent, and possessed of the same means for expressing it, but they always hold their own, and form the last link in the chain uniting the beginning of colour-printing in Japan with the highest point to which it ever attained.

[1] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

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CHAPTER III.

HARUNOBU, SHUNSHŌ, AND THEIR PUPILS.

SUCH Japanese writers as have condescended to bestow any attention on the biographies or works of the colour-print designers, have attributed to Suzuki Harunobu the "invention" of *nishiki-ye*. We have seen this to be entirely inaccurate. It is certain, however, that Harunobu made great improvements in the art of printing, and did a great deal to generally popularize the whole craft. He was a pupil of Nishimura Shigenaga, and lived at Yedo, in the street Gyōgoku Yonizawachō. His illustrated books are dated between the years 1763, when he illustrated a selection of Chinese poems in either two or three volumes, and 1779.[1] In the exhibition held by the Burlington Fine Arts Club (1888), Professor Anderson showed a book entitled "Yehon Haru no nishiki," illustrations (in colours) of spring scenery; this was engraved by Endo Mat-

[1] ANDERSON, British Museum Catalogue.

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sugorō, and published at Yedo in 1771. Harunobu's best-known work is especially distinguished for its refinement and delicacy. Early prints are found bearing his signature which show a simplicity and even rudeness of execution. Such an one[1] is a small-sized print representing Kumagai's challenge to Atsumori.[2] The composition is bold and effective, but there is no suggestion of the style the artist was to develop later. Four colours only are used, black, yellow, green and red, and the register is by no means perfect. It bears a publisher's mark, the signature of the engraver, *Kawayoshi*, and is signed simply *Harunobu*, without prefix. I should be inclined to consider it some years earlier in date than the Chinese poems above mentioned (1763). Between the dates mentioned, however, Harunobu devoted himself especially to the representation of young men and girls, treating his subjects with singular grace and refinement; the lines of the drapery flow easily and softly, and the expression of the faces is always that of a pleasing if slight sentiment. Harunobu never painted actors.

We have now to consider the first of those intricate questions of identity raised by a practice of Japanese artists of changing their names or adopting that of another man

[1] National Art Library Collection, J 4847.
[2] GRIFFIS, "Mikado's Empire," p. 145.

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already distinguished. During the period covered by the work of the last artist, we meet with prints similar to his in subject, in style, in costume, but bearing the signature *Koriūsai*.

Now this Koriūsai has always been considered as a separate artist. Professor Anderson so classes him, giving his names, Isoda Shōbei, and his date as about 1760 to 1780. But the Japanese say that there were two Koriusai, one an artist of *samurai* rank, who, by reason of his poverty, "made bad *nishiki-ye* for a living." Paintings, possibly by this man, are found with the signature, *Hokkiō Koriusai Masakatsu*. The other Koriusai is said to be identical with Suzuki Harunobu; and after a minute comparison of their work I have come to the conclusion that all the evidence goes to prove it. If Plate II. be considered in connection with the example signed Koriusai, at p. 32, in which a youth is supporting a girl on his shoulders while she adjusts a clock, the general similarity of treatment is at once apparent. The drapery may be well compared with that of a print reproduced by M. Bing in "Artistic Japan" (No. 27), although the representation of the inner garments by three lines, as in the sleeves of the figures of Plate II. will be found also in the folds of the man's dress at p. 32, while the treatment of the girl's sleeves in the latter is absolutely the same

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as in Harunobu's Chinese poems already referred to. But it is in the heads that the resemblance is most striking; especially in the curious white lines in the hair, the shading of the latter behind the ears, and the drawing of the eyes and mouth.

As to Koriūsai, we learn that he was a *samurai* of the family Tsuchiya, his personal name being Oda Shōbei; that he studied with Harunobu under the same master; lived in Yedo at Ogawachō, and was also known to his contemporaries as *Yedo Yaganbori Yeshi* (*i.e.*, the artist who worked at Yaganbori). He made *hachirakaki*—long panel pictures (prints only)—and had the honorary title of *Hokkio*. Harunobu died on the fifteenth day of the sixth month, 1770, and the *samurai* Koriusai in the following year.

Harunobu's pupil, Shiba Gōkan, had some fame as a book illustrator. Of him Professor Anderson says: "He introduced copper-plate engraving, which process he learned, together with other elements of European art, from a Dutch resident, and was probably the first Japanese who made use of the elements of linear perspective in pictorial art, but his education in the science was very imperfect. He died in 1818, at the age of seventy-one."

A son (?) of the same artist, Gakutei Harunobu, was the well-known designer of *surimono*. He was a pupil of Shunshō, and

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afterwards of his contemporary Hokusai (Chap. V.).

A little later in date flourished an artist, Katsugawa Shunshō, whom, by reason of his own greatness and of that of his pupils, critics have universally placed in the very foremost rank. So important, indeed, is he, that it is worth while to put on record every scrap of information relating to him; and we thus make no apology for the artistic genealogy, if the term may be used, which follows.

The line begins with a contemporary of Moronobu, Miyagawa Chōshun, a painter of the Popular School, who was born at the village of Miyagawa, Owari, in 1682. His son, Miyagawa Shunsui, had a dispute with the painter Kano Haruyoshi, and killed four of the Kano "family," for which he was sentenced to death, and Chōshun, who was implicated, to exile (*c.* 1750-51).

Miyagawa Shunsui was followed by pupils, Katsugawa Shunsui (c. 1741-43), Katsugawa Shinsui (c. 1751-71), and Jikatsu Miyagawa —afterwards Katsugawa Shunshō—whose first print, a portrait of the five celebrated actors called Gōnin Olokō, appeared in 1764. Shunshō "commonly used a seal shaped like a jar, and bearing the character *Hayashi*, the name of the merchant with whom he lodged. From this he received the nick-name of *Tsubo* (little jar), and his pupil Shunkō was called *Ko-tsubo*, or the 'Little

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Jar'" (Anderson). He died on the twelfth day of the eighth month of Kwansei 4 (1792), and was buried in the Saifukuji temple at Asakusa. No other biographical information of Shunshō has yet transpired.

He, like most other artists of the school, devoted his attention to the illustration of books, and produced several which must always rank among the world's masterpieces of book-making. Among these we may indicate a collection of portraits of actors, *Kōbi no Tsubo* (1770); *Seirō Bijin Awase kagami*, portraits of fair women (1776),—the best known, and justly most admired of his productions of this character,—and the *Nishiki Hiakunin Isshu*, "The Hundred Poets and their Poems" (1775). This latter work, when complete, contains six supplementary illustrations referring to the *Rokkasen*, or six genii-poets. It is signed *Ririn Katsugawa Yūsuke Fuji* (of Fujiwaro) *Shunshō*, Ririn being the name of his studio; the engraver was Inouye Shinshichirō.

Shunshō also executed some exquisite *surimono*; but his great reputation rests on the broadsheets he produced. These are often much smaller in size than those by later artists—who, indeed, seem to have adopted the proportions used by the pupils of Shunshō, about 14 × 10, as a tradition of some rigidity—the original of Plate III. being 12 inches by 6 only. The set from which this is reproduced can only be de-

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AN ACTOR DANCING.

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scribed as a series of harmonies in red and yellow—the term may surely be applied to the source of its inspiration,—and included therein are several cuts by Shunshō's favourite pupil, Shunkō, so similar in style and treatment that without the saving grace of the signatures it would be impossible to distinguish the work of the pupil from that of the master. Another print in this album[1] is also notable. The subject is a Buddhist angel, winged, and playing on a lute; the feeling and treatment such, that one wonders by what devious lines Shunshō could have acquired the inspiration of the early Italian Renaissance.

Of a very different type is the illustration[2] in Chap. VII.: two actors, one in female costume in a scene from a drama. The strength of this picture seems to lie in the lines of the composition; in the bold arrangement of solid black—surely an indication of the origin of a method pursued with so much success by the next generation; in a certain hardness and severity of treatment which bore fruit, as we shall see, to the extent of a whole school of followers. The drapery is treated with unusual reticence, and in the falling of the folds with some convention; the proportions of the figures are excellent, except that of the man's head, where an exaggeration is so

[1] National Art Library Collection, No. J 5038-59.
[2] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

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obviously intended as to call for no excuse. Shunshō, we may say, invariably keeps his drapery quiet in tone; moreover, he always represented contemporary fashions, instead of, as did other artists, taking those of a previous age.

Shunshō was essentially a master, and we meet with evidences of his influence throughout the whole remaining history of the art we are now discussing. Of immediate pupils, Shunkō is the most faithful to his traditions: of him no biographical information has been obtained, and good specimens of his work are rare. But of all the artists who owed their first discipline to the instructions of Shunshō, Katsugawa Shunrō is the one who has conferred most fame on his master, by the very act of breaking from his traditions. Shunrō is rarely seen as a signature to a colour-print; but Hokusai, the name adopted by him after his declaration of independence, has travelled farther into the world than any other in all the art of Japan.

Of the other pupils, Gakutei is referred to elsewhere: Shunman designed *surimono*—a set of studies of flowers by him made for this purpose are of very high merit; Shinyei,[1] also called Kintokusai, who died in 1819 at the age of fifty-eight; Shunyei Shunjō, Shunkiu, Shunkō and Shunki, all

[1] BING. "Artistic Japan," No. 9, contains a good example.

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PORTRAIT OF AŌ-GIYA KWASEN.

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followed closely in the style of their master. We reproduce at p. 34 a colour-print by the latter, an actor engaged in one of the character-dances occasionally given on the Japanese stage. It is a good composition, but does not rise to a very high dramatic level.

In this place we should perhaps mention Katsugawa Shunchō, who, although his school-name would seem to suggest the mastership of Shunshō, should rather be classed with Kiyonaga. His early work consisted of dainty broadsheets, the subjects especially outdoor scenes, picnics, promenades, and the like. Later, he modified his style somewhat in the direction of the manner of Utamaro, although he never quite adopted the latter's characteristics. His work can always be recognized by the caligraphic character of the outlines. They have all the appearance of having been dashed off with a very instinct of accuracy by a master of the pen. His colours are, in well-preserved specimens, singularly pure and fresh; in the original of our illustration at p. 36 the combs have a subtle effect of semi-transparency which is, unhappily, quite lost in the reproduction. This print represents Aō-giya Kwasen, a popular beauty of the day; the mark under the artist's signature is that of the publisher, Tsuru-ya of Yedo.

Shunchō worked after about 1780; our

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illustration should perhaps belong to the period 1790-1800. He illustrated "Kusazoshi" (popular novelettes, small in size, with text and illustration on the same page) between 1800 and 1820, and afterwards, says Professor Anderson, "gave up the *Ukiyo-yé* style, and changed his name to Shunken. He was still living in 1821."

The last of the Katsugawas who demands reference is Katsugawa Shuntei, a pupil of Shunyei, also called Shōkōsai and Katsunami Kana-i. He was a great invalid, and made but few prints, which were issued for the most part by the publisher Murataya. He lived *c.* 1800-20, and, in addition to book-illustration, produced broadsheets of interest and originality. Among these, the most notable are legendary or historical scenes, executed with considerable dramatic force, and printed generally in a characteristic colour scheme, of which grays, greens, and yellows are the prevailing tints. The illustration at p. 38 is a portion of a two-sheet print representing Heida Yegara killing a fiery serpent. Shuntei also made portraits of famous wrestlers, whose curious over-development of muscle is treated by him with perhaps less apparent caricature than by any of the later artists. Shuntei must be looked on as, in some sense, the forerunner of the school of historical artists which arose after 1830. His colour is more harmonious and reticent, his draw-

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YEGARA HEIDA KILLING A FIERY SERPENT.

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ing finer, and his dramatic power and intensity equals, when he is at his best, even that of Toyokuni. Early impressions by this artist, with the fine old colours, are by no means common; the later reprints are, from the collector's point of view, worthless.

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CHAPTER IV.

UTAMARO, TOYOKUNI, AND YEISHI.

In the hands of Kiyonaga and Shunshō the technique of colour-printing had almost reached its zenith. The wood-cutting was equal to the highest demands of the designers, the palette of the printer contained enough colours for all practical purposes, although the tendency for a long while was towards further multiplication of blocks, and, in a sense, the style had already become crystallized—the limitations imposed by the material agreed upon within certain broad lines. It was now pre-eminently the time for the appearance of great men, and three of such reputed rank were not found wanting, Hokusai, Utamaro, and Toyokuni.

To the life and work of Hokusai we devote the next chapter; for if he was the contemporary of the other two, yet his greatest fame came after theirs had begun to wane, while a great and vigorous age associated him too closely with the work of three generations to permit that he should justly be identified with that of any one.

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But the case of the other two artists is different. They were contemporaries in work, as well as in date, and their lives have a definite co-relationship, from which Hokusai is almost altogether excluded.

To begin with Utamaro, it is first to be said that he is of the Kitagawa family, his own name Yusuke, his studio-names, first, Nobuyoshi, then Murasaki Ki-ya. He is said to have been born at Yedo, but the authority of M. de Goncourt[1] places this event at Kawagoye, in the province of Musashi or Bushiu, and in the year 1754. In early life he came to Yedo, taking up his residence with Tsuta-ya Juzabrō, the celebrated publisher, in a house near the main entrance to the Yoshiwara. Tsuta-ya changed his residence to Tōri-Abra-chō, Utamaro still accompanying him, and here, in 1797, the well-known publisher is said to have died.[2] Utamaro also lived in the streets Kiūyemon-chō, and Bakro-chō, San-chōme, finally settling near the Bridge Benkei.

Utamaro was at first a student of the Kano School of painting, but afterwards became a pupil of Toriyama Sekiyen. His early work consisted of portraiture, but he devoted himself later in life almost entirely to the delineation of the scenes and personages of the Yoshiwara; although, in

[1] E. DE GONCOURT. "Outamaro." Paris, 1891.
[2] E. DE GONCOURT. But it is doubtful.

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spite of what has been commonly said, he made a few pictures both of actors and of scenes of every-day life (*Kinsei nishiki-ye*). One of these latter we reproduce in Chap. X. It represents street jugglers outside the house of a daimyō on New Year's Day, and is from a series of five pictures of entertainments on that festival, one for each of the classes of society.

In the course of his life he certainly paid one visit to Nagasaki, where he is mentioned in connection with a local artist, Seichō; it is also recorded that he sold many colour-prints to the Dutch merchants (see Introduction). Utamaro's illustrations of birds, flowers, and fish were made towards the end of his life.

Utamaro was an illiterate man—skilful to a degree, but with the entire absence of self-control which is occasionally found to accompany an extreme development of the artistic sense. He gave way to dissipation to such an extent, that his publishers combined to put moral pressure on him. They feared that so profitable a source of business might be lost to them, and, as has already been said, one of them actually lodged Utamaro for a number of years, and as far as possible kept him in retirement. During this time he was induced to educate himself to some extent, and the "Yehon Taikōki" (story of Taiko Hideyoshi) brought much custom to his publisher. Utamaro's most

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PORTRAIT OF UTAMARO AT WORK.

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PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

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famous book is his "Seirō Nenjiu gioji," the Book of the Yoshiwara, published in 1804 by Kasusaya Tusuke (Ju-ō) of Yedo, near the Nihon Bashi, engraved by Fuji Katsumuni, and printed by Kwakushōdō Tōyemon.

At p. 42 we give a portrait[1] of Utamaro at work painting a large Hō bird, with three young women watching him from the door of the studio. A specimen of his landscape style is also reproduced in the chapter dealing with that subject.

Utamaro died of the effects of dissipation in 1806, on the third day of the fifth month. There has been some doubt as to this date, but M. de Goncourt, who first gave it, is certainly right. In the early years of the period Bunkwa (beginning with 1804), a certain amateur of colour-prints travelled from Uwashiro, in Oshiu province, to Nagasaki, where he saw and much admired Utamaro's work: thence he passed to Yedo, and after visiting Toyokuni has placed upon record his preference for the earlier artist.

Utamaro's principa' pupils were Kikumaro I. (he was followed by another of the same name), who worked from 1789 to 1829, and is identical with Tsukimaro, Chikamaro, Hidemaro, and Yukimaro; the last two being students at the time of the master's death.

Utamaro owes his inspiration to Shige-

[1] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

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masa and Kiyonaga, especially the latter. He adopts a different type of face, and one might even say, refines somewhat; but there can be no doubt as to the relationship of their styles. M. de Goncourt mentions a print believed by M. Hayashi to have been executed in the studio of Kiyonaga between 1770 and 1775, and we have those high authorities for the statement that it would be impossible, but for the signature, to decide that it was not by Kiyonaga himself.

There has been some doubt as to the existence of an artist who succeeded Utamaro and used his name; but this fact may now be accepted without question. Shunchō, whose name may also be read Harumachi, was a fellow-student of Utamaro and Shikō under Toriyama Sekiyen, but he is not to be confused with the great artist of that name (see p. 37), a mistake which has frequently been made. When Utamaro died Shunchō married his widow, and from the house in Bakro-chō continued to work under the name of his old companion, not only completing his unfinished designs, but issuing new ones with the dead artist's signature. This occurred from about 1808 to 1820. He afterwards took the name of Kitagawa Tetsugōrō.

This question of prints by other artists bearing the signature of Utamaro will become a very important one for collectors. The instance we have just quoted was

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LADY AT THE TEA CEREMONY.

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already, at least, a matter of suspicion; it must now be reckoned with as a fact. And thereto may be added the disquieting information from a Japanese source, that at the height of Utamaro's local popularity both Toyokuni I. and Shunsen charitably did their best to satisfy the demands of the public by copying the other artist's subjects and signature. These prints were published by a fan-maker named Hori-ichō, and appeared about 1807.

Almost everyone who has studied Utamaro's work will have noticed the great inequalities in the prints attributed to him, especially in those whose large variety of colours proclaims the lateness of their date. There is very little doubt that these facts carry the explanation of the difficulty. For the spurious examples display not the consistent deterioration to which any artist might be liable, but a misunderstanding of the design and carelessness of drawing which positively amount to blunders. The author has recently had an opportunity of inspecting some prints, bearing the signature of Utamaro, and with all his obvious mannerisms writ large upon them; but, to give one instance only, the hands of the central figure formed so casual a portion of the composition that one would not have been surprised at finding three of them instead of two. It must be remembered that Utamaro died at a comparatively early age.

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He scarcely had time—never sufficient application—to trade upon his popularity to any great extent; and, in view of this, it will probably be safe to reject from collections of his work any of the broadsheets containing evidences of weakness or want of originality.

The period with which we are now dealing saw the rise of what was to be the most prolific school of colour-printers, the Utagawas. It was founded by Toyoharu, of whom we know but little, but that he died between 1804 and 1817, at the age of sixty-nine.[1] His work is very rare.

Five of Toyoharu's pupils are mentioned. Toyohiro (Ichiryūsai) was famous as a book illustrator[2] as well as a colour-printer. We show (at p. 46) an example of his broadsheets which has a movement and originality quite unexpected; the effect of wind on the foliage and draperies is finely rendered. Toyohiro died in 1828. We may pass over Hichizemon, a book illustrator; Toyohisa, who made prints in the style of Yeisan, but with more realism in the expression of the faces, and Toyomaru, of whom nothing is known, in order to consider, without further delay, Toyoharu's fifth and greatest pupil, Utagawa Toyokuni.

Toyokuni was the son of Kurabashi Gorōbei, who lived in the Shiba quarter of

[1] ANDERSON.

[2] ANDERSON (British Museum Catalogue, p. 347,) gives a list of his best works.

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A WINDY DAY.

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Yedo near the Shinto temple Shimmei, where he acquired much fame as a maker of Buddhist images in wood, and also those of actors, one in particular, that of Ichikawa Hakuzō, being especially mentioned as a popular success.

Toyokuni's own name was Kumakichi. He was born in 1768, and first studied the styles of Hanabusa Ichiō and Giokusan. He was sent by his father to Toyoharu to learn the art of colour-printing, and distinguished himself even as a student by his talent, so much so as to obtain pupils of his own. He died at the age of fifty-seven, in 1825 (Bunsei eight, year of the Cock), on the seventh day of the first month.

Toyokuni especially devoted himself to broadsheet portraits of actors and dramatic scenes, but also illustrated several novels by Kiōden, Bakin and others, and executed some landscapes now rarely met with. Perhaps the finest of his productions in this form is a small work in two volumes, entitled "Yakusha Kono Teikishiwa," a choice selection of famous actors. It is in two volumes, printed in colours, in the master's best style, and was published by Injiudo at Yedo in 1801. We illustrate at p. 48 a typical print of an actor, and also a portrait of a woman[1] in the style of Utamaro. Plate V. is from a magnificently coloured specimen[1] of his early work—

[1] Both in the collection of Mr. Edgar Wilson.

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perhaps one of the finest examples remaining. A comparison between two great contemporary artists is not a new device of criticism, but nevertheless will probably continue to be a favourite one, so useful is it to use each in turn as a foil to show up the merits or defects of the other. The case of Utamaro and Toyokuni is one which absolutely demands such a procedure. The account we have given of the two artists will have hinted that there was a deliberate rivalry between the two men, for when Toyokuni illustrated the story of the two lovers, Ohan and Chōyemon, by the portraits of the famous Ichikawa Yawozō and other actors, Utamaro at once dealt with the same subject in a purely romantic style, entirely excluding the dramatic element. And when Toyokuni issued a book devoted to the Yedo ladies of the Yoshiwara, his rival delayed but a little to attempt the same theme in exactly the same manner, but with his own ideal and entirely less human treatment.

In fact, that is just the difference between them. The creations of Utamaro are pure abstractions, dainty, perfect in sentiment, the mere refinement of an ideal vice. Toyokuni never loses sight of the humanity of his subjects. The pomp of the stage has never been portrayed with such strength and intensity as by him. If his figures strike one with a sense of exaggeration, it

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AN ACTOR.

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PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

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is but a tribute to their realism. The aim of the actor is to condense the emotions of a lifetime within the space of a few minutes, and Toyokuni alone has succeeded in picturing them as they should in stage-reality appear.

Another element must be taken into consideration in estimating the relative greatness of these men. While Hokusai and Toyokuni numbered their pupils by the score, and were imitated by every succeeding generation as long as the craft remained, those of Utamaro can be counted on the fingers of one hand. He was a result—practically final; each of the others an inspiration for the ages to come.

The pupils of Toyokuni were very many, and may be generally known by the prefix "Kuni-" which they adopted. There is no space in the present work to deal with them *seriatim;* indeed, it must be acknowledged that the hand of the master lies heavy on them, and that with few exceptions they display little individuality, although almost invariably a pleasing capability.

In the first place we have to deal with one of the worst cases of confusion arising out of the similarity of Japanese artist-names. Toyokuni's son, Naogiro, was a student under his father. He at first adopted the name of Toyoshige, but later that of his father, occasionally also signing Gosōtei Toyokuni. His work is more akin

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to that of Yeisen than that of Toyokuni I. It is strong in line and good in colour. Gosōtei Toyokuni's prints have been hitherto ascribed, almost at random, either to his father or to Toyokuni II. (Kunisada). And yet it is easy to separate them by the difference in style, and still more so by the signature. For that of Gosōtei is one of the most invariable in its form of all the colour-print makers, and it need never be confused with the quite different caligraphy of the other two artists who used the signs. Prints by Gosōtei are not uncommon; our illustration, however, is from a *surimono* by him [1]—sufficiently rare to be noteworthy.

The most prolific, and, by the number of his works, the most widely known of Toyokuni's [2] pupils was the artist who used the signatures Utagawa Kunisada and Toyokuni the Second, with or without the prefixes Ichiyōsai, Gotōtei, or Kachōrō. His family name was Tsunada Chōzō. He was born in Bushiū, and lived at Yedo, in Kami-idō, near the Temman temple. As a pupil he was very clever, and a great favourite with his master, Toyokuni, and at the early age of twenty-three published his first illustrated books (Bunkwa 5=1808). At the same age he also gained renown by a broadsheet portrait of the famous actor,

[1] From the collection of Mr. Edgar Wilson.

[2] It will be understood that when not alluding to Toyokuni I., a qualifying word or figure is always used.

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A WOMAN AT HER TOILET.

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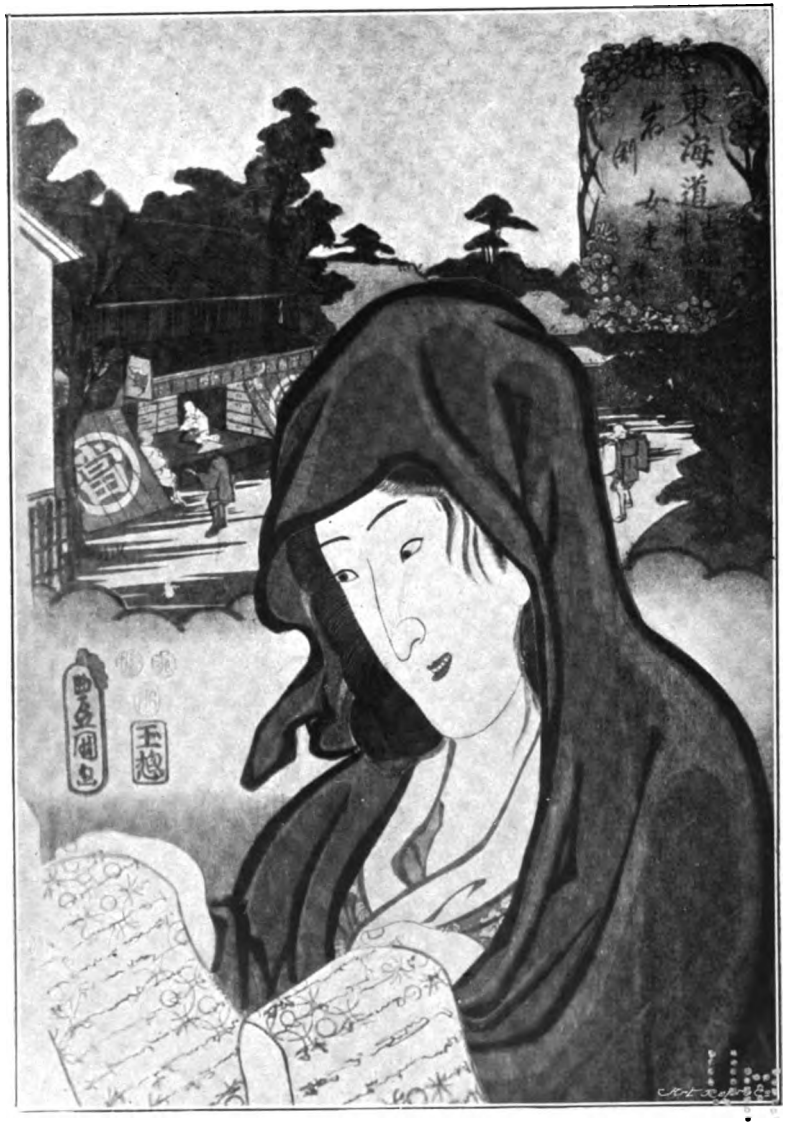

WOMAN IN COSTUME OF DARUMA.

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THEATRICAL CHARACTER.

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Nakamura Utazemon, engraved by a fan-maker Nishimuriya Yohachi—the first wood-cutter employed by Kunisada. The latter also studied various styles of designing in company with his friend Hanabusa Ikkei, pupil of Hanabusa Ichiō, and so took the name of Kachōrō. He died in 1864 or 1865, on the fifteenth day of the twelfth month, at the advanced age of seventy-nine, and was buried at Kame-ido mura in the temple of Komeiji. He had enjoyed life to the full, and, in spite of a reputation for gambling and dissipation, he retained his skill to the end; for our third illustration at p. 50 is inscribed "Toyokuni, made at the request of his friends, in his seventy-eighth year." He only used the name of his master as a signature after 1844.

In his younger days he was considered the equal of his master, and many of his prints of this period have fine qualities, although it is hardly possible for us to rank them quite so highly as their models. But it was Kunisada's fate to see the decline of chromo-xylography in Japan. In his work every stage of it can be traced—the excessive facility, the increase in the number of blocks used and consequent complexity of design and pettiness of execution, the gradual introduction of European colours in place of those of the old traditions: all these are displayed in a series of prints—enormous in bulk—ranging from proximity

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to the best period nearly to the absolute worst. And at the end of it all, the old man still knew what was good, for the print already referred to falls little short of his best work.

Kuniyoshi, also a pupil of Toyokuni, was born at Yedo, and dwelt in that city at Motoganechō Nichiōme. He was the son of a printer of dress-material, Kogiya of Kyōto. While he was a student he was associated with a fellow-pupil, Kuninao, who is said to have influenced his landscape work. His prints were not appreciated at first by his contemporaries, and he published several illustrated books between 1804 and 1817. In the following decade he achieved success by means of three-sheet prints issued by Higashiya Daisuke, and also by views of the waterfall of Benten, at Oyama, Soshiū. As an outcome of this, many publishers gave him commissions. He then devoted himself to dramatic scenes and portraits of actors, which have much merit, although in the great stress of competition he again failed to obtain immediate recognition. In order to develop, if possible, a line of his own, he now gave his attention to portraits of warriors, and military scenes, publishing among others the "Siukoden," or hundred and eight Chinese heroes. He also illustrated many *kusazoshi* in the style of Shunyei. He died in 1861, on the fourth day of the third month, and was buried at Asakusa.

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PORTRAITS OF HOKUSAI AND BAKIN.

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Of Kuniyoshi personally nothing is recorded, except that he also lived a life of dissipation, and was "tattooed on his back." Plate VI. is a good example of his work; an uncommon but charming scheme of colour occasionally used also by Kunisada and Yeisen: apple-green is sometimes employed in combination with the blues and red. Utagawa Kuniyoshi also used the signatures Ichiyūsai and Chō-ōrō, but always in combination with his own name.

Of the remaining artists of this school, Kuniyasu (Ippōsai Yasugōrō) may be mentioned. He was born at Yedo, made his first colour-print—a portrait of the actor Utazemon, in the play "Tadanobu Michiuki"—about the year 1817. He changed his name to Nishikawa Yasunobu, but afterwards abandoned it for the former signature. He died in the period Tempō (1830-1843), aged only thirty. His work is never inferior to the best of Kunisada's or of the other pupils of Toyokuni, and has scarcely yet received the appreciation it merits.

It will be sufficient to merely mention the names of other followers of Toyokuni. The earliest and best were Kunimasa, Kunimitsu, and Kunihisa; of the others, Kunichika, Kunimaro, Kunimaru, Kuniteru, Kunisato, Kunitora, Kunitsuna and Kunitomi are the chief. Several of these are referred to at more length in a later chapter. The illustrations at pp. 52 and 54 are from

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GIRL ON A WINDY DAY.

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KUNIYOSHI

PORTRAITS OF TOYOKUNI I., YEISEN, AND KUNIYOSHI.

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a book by Kuniyoshi, "Nippon Kininden" —famous men of Japan,—and are especially interesting in connection with this chapter, for they include portraits of several of the artists dealt with herein. In that on p. 53 the old man at work is Hokusai, the other his friend Bakin, the great novelist. On p. 55 are those of Keisai Yeisen, characteristically employed in drinking, Toyokuni with the fan, and the artist himself, Kuniyoshi, seated modestly with his back to the beholder.

An artist of this period, who belongs more properly to the school of Kiyonobu and his followers, may nevertheless, as a matter of convenience, be dealt with here. Yeishi was the *nom de pinceau* of Fujiwara Tomichi, a name which would suggest that he was of *samurai* lineage. He lived at Hamachō and Honjō Warishitashi in Yedo. At first he studied under Kano Yeisen,[1] who was also called Bunryūsai, but afterwards allied himself to the Torii School (Chap. II.), and adopted a name, Chōbunsai,[2] which expressed both influences. In later life he also came under the spell of Hokusai. Yeishi's prints are rare, and of much beauty. His methods are generally those of Kiyonaga, but the colouring is more vivid, and the treatment generally more elaborate. He

[1] Not to be confused with Keisai Yeisen, the designer of *nishiki-ye*.

[2] *Chō* is another reading of *Torii*.

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A PROMENADE.

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flourished during the years 1781-1800, his best-known pupils being Yeiri, Yeisho, and Yeiji, who was at one time associated with Keisai Yeisen; they form the group known as the Hosoda School, whose prints have hitherto been but rarely met with in Europe.

The exact reverse of this is, however, the case with the work of the next artist we have to consider; for, in one condition or another, few of the *nishiki-ye* of this period are so often seen as those of Kikugawa Yeizan. Yeizan was the son of a painter, Kano Yeiji,[1] his family name being Giokusai Mangōrō. He lived at Yedo, Ichigaya Nōza Kakigarachō, at the house called Omiya, and was first a maker of artificial flowers. Yeizan was a friend of Hokkei's, and at one time they studied together the styles of Utamaro, Hokusai, and others. As Toyokuni, however, became popular, Yeizan imitated also his style. After about 1829 Yeizan turned his attention to authorship, and both wrote and illustrated books.

Among Yeizan's numerous works his most successful are undoubtedly in the style of Utamaro, to whom he is occasionally a dangerous rival. His composition is always good, its lines flowing with boldness, grace, and sometimes originality. Those who value Japanese colour-prints for their intrinsic

[1] Again we must warn readers against confusion. This artist never made colour-prints.

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merit—apart from such qualities of rareness or eccentricity as appeal to the collector—will easily gain much pleasure, at little expense, by acquiring specimens of this artist's work. The illustration is from a two-sheet panel picture in the author's possession.

To this school belongs also the great artist Shikō, who equals—almost surpasses—Utamaro in his own methods. We can give no information as to his life, but reproduce at p. 60 an example which should show how graceful and tender his work could be.

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PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

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CHAPTER V.

HOKUSAI AND HIS PUPILS.

Of the artists we have hitherto dealt with there is a singular dearth of biographical information. Singular, that is, from a European point of view. For, admiring the *nishiki-ye*, as we do, it is extremely difficult for us to realize that their producers were but artisans of no social importance; and that it would no more occur to the Japanese *littérateur* to store up personal information about them, than it would for us to concern ourselves with the domestic history of competent carpenters or smiths: so that we have to rely on the collation of scraps of evidence gathered from all sorts of casual sources, dated works, dedicatory inscriptions, and the like; while in just a few instances, mentioned from time to time in this work in their places, a portrait may have been preserved by the care of a brother artisan, or a tradition have been handed along by word of mouth among the people who delighted in work of this kind.

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In the case of Hokusai, deservedly the best known in Europe of the Japanese artists of the Popular School, much labour has been expended by Messrs. Gonse, Hayashi, Bing, and Anderson, in collecting and arranging materials for his biography; and finally M. Edmond de Goncourt, as with Utamaro, has produced a most charming treatise,[1] critical and historical, on the great artist and his work, accompanying it with the most complete bibliography of the latter yet made. This represents the sum total of the information at present available and is the general authority for the following account.

Hokusai was born at Yedo, in the Honjô quarter, on the 5th March, 1760 — the eighteenth day of the first month of the tenth year of Horeki, according to the Japanese method of chronology. He was the third son of an artist—or more correctly artisan—of unknown profession, named Kawamura Ichiroyemon, also called Bunsei, and as a child was named Tokitaro. At the age of four, he was adopted by a mirror-maker, Nakajiwa Issai, said to be of the Tokugawa family, whom earlier biographers have generally styled his father. While still a boy, says M. de Goncourt, he was employed in a book-shop at Yedo, where he did his work with such idleness and scorn, that he was shown the door.

[1] "Hokousai." Par E. de Goncourt. 8vo. Paris, 1896.

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This employment, however, seems to have aroused a passion for literary art; and in the years 1773, 1774, he was learning the craft of a wood-engraver, and in 1775, under the name of Tetsuzō, he cut the last six blocks for a novel by Sanchō. This occupation he followed until the year 1778, when he entered the studio of a famous master to whom reference has already been made, Katsugawa Shunshō, taking, in accordance with the prevailing custom, the student-name of Katsugawa Shunrō.

While he remained under the tutelage of Shunshō, Hokusai seems to have principally devoted himself to book illustration, in several instances furnishing the literary matter himself. He also issued several broadsheets, as yet giving no indication of the style which he afterwards wielded with such mastery. The figures are gracefully drawn in the old conventional manner, and were no doubt looked on, to use the cant phrase of our own day, as good student's work. But in 1786 Hokusai achieved a revolution in himself, under circumstances curiously redolent of modernity. He designed a poster for a printseller, which the latter, in the pride and joy of his heart, exhibited in a rich frame outside his shop. There it was beheld by a fellow-student who straightway, "*pour sauver l'honneur de l'atelier Shunshō*," executed summary justice by the simple process of tearing it down. The

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dispute which followed drove Hokusai from the studio. He changed his signature to that of Mugura to signify that henceforth he was independent of all schools; and therewith adopted for the first time the originality of style which he afterwards so effectively developed.

The next few years of his life were devoted mainly to book illustration, and even to authorship, his signatures changing from time to time in a manner most confusing to the collector. M. de Goncourt has, however, tabulated them in his book, and thus furnished a rough guide to the chronology of his work. Thus, to mention the best known of his *noms de pinceau*, he used the name Shunrō from 1778 to 1786, the compositions bearing it being in a refined manner, based on that of Shunshō, but more in accordance with that of the little-known artist Shikō, the most graceful of all the figure designers of his time. In 1795 the signature Hishikawa Sōri is first met with, and used with or without the prefix till about 1800. In 1794 he had illustrated a novel under the name of Tokitarō Kakō, and the signature also appears at the foot of his prose work about 1800-1804. At p. 64 we illustrate a scene from the play of the "Forty-seven Rōnin," signed simply Kakō. This is ascribed by M. de Goncourt to 1798 at least, but from the style one would be inclined to date it

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A PIC-NIC PARTY.

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even farther back. The signature Hokusai, in various combinations seems to appear first in 1796, and was apparently continued till 1834, when he adopted the pseudonym Mangi (ten thousand), and also the symbol 卍 (the *svastica*). These were used till his death. In addition one may mention the names Katsushika Taito; Tamekazu or I-itsu—a signature often erroneously read as Tame-ichi; Shinsai, used in 1799-1800 and then given to a favourite pupil, Hanji; and the various poetical epithets "Old Man mad with painting," "Old Man mad with the moon," and the like.[1]

In 1793 appeared the earliest known *surimono* of Hokusai, signed Mugura Shunrō. The design is that of a young water-seller, seated on the yoke which serves to carry his pots, near a piece of furniture with pots and pans. It was issued as an invitation ticket to a concert on the occasion of a change of name by the musician Tokiwazu Mozitayu.

About the end of the seventeenth century we have an instance of the appreciation shown by the Dutch merchants, of the Japanese popular art of the period. A Dutchman, believed, says M. de Goncourt to have been Captain Isbert Hemmel, commissioned Hokusai to execute two *makimono*

[1] I have used the word "mad," but in only a rare sense does it convey the meaning "madly in love." The French *fou* expresses it much better.—E. F. S.

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showing the various incidents from birth to death of a Japanese man and woman, respectively. The price was an equivalent of about £150 sterling, which seems, it must be remarked, inordinately large compared with the remuneration we know other colour-print designers to have received: and a doctor attached to the ship also ordered a duplicate copy for himself.

Hokusai is said to have devoted all his knowledge and skill to the preparation of these paintings; but when they were delivered the doctor endeavoured to beat down the price, saying that the work in his rolls was unequal to that in those made for the captain. Although the whole of the money was forestalled by debt, and the direst poverty seemed to await his family, Hokusai refused to give way, saying, in reply to the reproaches of his wife, that he preferred misery to humiliation. However, the captain, hearing of the affair, himself purchased the other copy.

These paintings, which would now be of almost inestimable value, have never been traced. M. Gonse has made search in the most likely place, the museum at the Hague, but without effect.

M. de Goncourt, appreciating the objection to the difficulty as to the price said to have been paid for the rolls, quotes a letter addressed by Hokusai, in 1836, to a publisher; from which it appears that his rate at

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SCENE FROM THE PLAY "CHŪSHINGURA" (THE FORTY-SEVEN RŌNIN).

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that time for designs for book illustration was about five or six shillings each.

In 1799 Hokusai published one of the best known of his books of landscapes, the "Azuma Asobi" ("Walk around the Capital of the East," *i.e.*, Yedo). This book was first issued as one volume in black and white only, and in this form copies are rare and valuable; but in 1802 it reappeared in three volumes in colour. From the former[1] we select for illustration (p. 67) a view of the shop of the bookseller, Tsuta-ya, who published for Utamaro, Hokusai, and many of the colour-print artists. His mark, which is prominent in the picture, will be recognized on many of the broadsheets.

Another well-known and historically interesting subject in this book is a picture of the exterior of the lodging of the Dutchmen at Nagasaki. The inquisitive attitude of the passers-by who are inspecting such of the despised foreigners as can be seen within the lattice is portrayed with curious and subtle humour.

Plate VII., reproduced in colours, is from the "Sumidagawa Riogan Ichiran," a similar collection of views on the Sumida river, published in three volumes in 1806.

Of the landscapes which Hokusai began to issue about this time we can only enumerate a series of eight views of Lake Biwa, five sets of the views of the Tōkaidō,

[1] In the collection of Mr. Charles Holme.

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and views of the Tamagawa and Sumidagawa. He is related to have learned perspective in 1796 from an artist, Shiba Kōkan, who had received instruction therein from the Dutch; and in this year he certainly issued a set of landscapes displaying traces of Dutch influence, and signed in the European manner—horizontally—instead of as usual.

From 1805 to 1820, or thereabouts, Hokusai illustrated many novels, among them some by the famous writer Bakin. From one of these our illustration at p. 68 is taken, as an example of his method of working at the time. His connection with Bakin originated, perhaps, the greatest of his works. The designs made for these novels had such success as to arouse the jealousy of the author, who complained that the illustrations were not always in accordance with the text. Out of this dispute quarrels arose which resulted in an open breach: Hokusai admitting the charge, but claiming that the merit of his drawings was such as to require the alteration of the text to suit the illustrations rather than the reverse. Hokusai determined, with the independence of character displayed throughout his life, that he would henceforth stand or fall by himself. In 1812 he published the first volume of the famous "Mangwa," the *raison d'être* of which is perhaps best explained by a preface by Hanshu, translated by M. Hayashi to the following effect:

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THE SHOP OF HOKUSAI'S PUBLISHER.

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ILLUSTRATION TO A NOVEL BY BAKIN.

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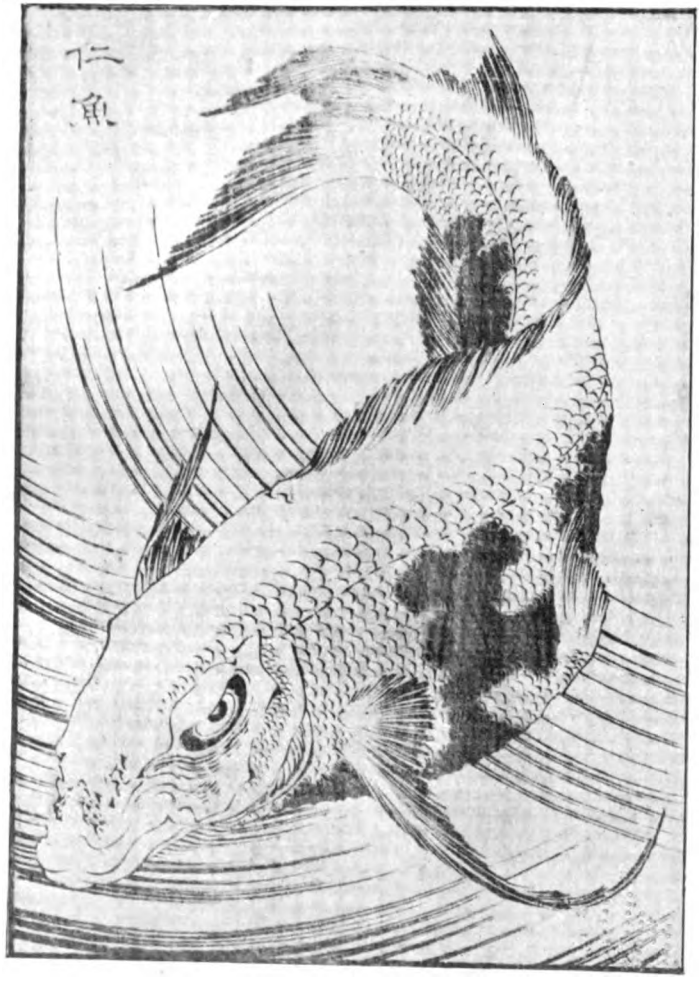
HOKUSAI



FISH.

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"Hokusai, the painter of so extraordinary a talent, after having travelled in the West, has stayed in our city (Nagoya), and there he has made the acquaintance of our friend Bokusen, had entertained himself by discussing with him the subject of drawing, and, in these conversations, has executed more than 300 designs. Now we wished that these lessons should be made profitable to all those who learn drawing, and it has been decided to print them in a volume, and when we asked Hokusai what title should be given thereto, he said simply 'Mangwa,' to which we have added his name." The title has been translated "Drawing as it comes spontaneously."

It is difficult to speak with due appreciation of the encyclopædic work of genius which thus had its origin. It covers the whole ground of Japanese life and legend, art and handicraft. Each volume—often each page—is teeming with studies; each study in itself a masterpiece which would make the reputation of any artist. Its success was immediate in Japan. It procured the artist, even among his own people, the fame of a prophet; and founded a school at the very outset, of which Hokutei Bokusen (the friend who happily suggested the work) and Hoku-un (who, says M. de Goncourt, became "the professor of architecture of the master") were the first pupils. In the second volume (1814) Hokusai had assistance in

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preparing the drawings for publication, of Todoya Hokkei, as well as of Bokusen. The third volume was issued in 1815, the next five in 1816, the ninth and tenth in 1819, when the series was apparently intended to be concluded. However, in 1834 such pressure was brought to bear on the artist, that he issued two more volumes, in no way inferior to the earlier set. The thirteenth was issued, after Hokusai's death, in 1849, and a fourteenth so late as 1875, compiled from drawings left by the master. Yet another was published in 1878 with a similar claim; but most of the drawings of any value therein had already been published in a volume entitled "Hokusai Gwakyō."

A pretty tale is told of the fame this publication brought to the artist. The Shogun desired a specimen of his skill, and ordered him to be brought into his presence—an unheard-of honour at that time for one of the lower classes of Japan. Then Hokusai painted a strip of paper with a wash of indigo, and making fowls run over it, after having dipped their feet in purple, produced a charming sketch of the river Tatsuta, bearing on its bosom leaves of the *momiji*.

From 1823 to 1829 Hokusai issued his finest set of broadsheet landscapes, the thirty-six views of Mount Fuji, a series actually consisting of at least forty-six plates, catalogued seriatim by M. de Gon-

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court. These views are perhaps, taken as a whole, the most superb set of landscape compositions—in the technical sense of the word—ever made in the history of the world's art. Fuji, whose bold yet tender lines dominate Japan from end to end, has been an object of loving reverence to the Japanese from the earliest times. The tradition which placed its formation in the fifth year of the Emperor Kōrei (B.C. 285) was sufficiently widespread to call for serious discussion in the "Wakan sanzai dzuye," an encyclopædia published in 1714; and therein the author solemnly considers the possibility of a convulsion of nature having caused at one stroke the upthrow of Fuji, and the depression now known as Lake Biwa, and dismisses it as absurd.

Around Fuji poems by the thousand have been written, and innumerable legends have grown; perhaps the best known—even the most beautiful—being that of the bamboo-cutter's daughter[1]—the Taketori Monogatari—that wondrous fairy tale of the moon princess, who brought fortune to the old wood-cutter and sorrow to the heart of the Mikado, whose burning of the Elixir of Life, left him by the princess, caused the smoke still to be seen rising from the summit.

It was fitting that the greatest artist of

[1] Japanese Fairy Tale Series. "The Legend of Princess Splendour." 2nd ed. HASEGAWA, Tōkyō, 1895.

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Japan should devote himself to the picturing of his country's fairest feature; and impossible that he should do other than make it his own masterpiece.

In 1834 Hokusai published his "Hundred Views of Mount Fuji," a series of black and white studies in three volumes, so well described and reproduced by Mr. F. V. Dickins that we need do no more than mention the work in this volume.[1]

About this time Hokusai became seriously embarrassed by reason of the escapades of the artist Shigenobu, who had married his daughter Omiyo; he was compelled to leave Yedo and remain in exile for five years, during which time he wrote some pathetic letters, given at length by M. de Goncourt.

Even when his exile was at an end, sorrow awaited him, for his house and all the accumulated work of his life was burnt, so that of all his property he saved only his brush.

He kept at work even to the end of his days. His death on April 13th. 1849, was singularly characteristic. The old man—he was now eighty-nine—is said to have prayed almost in his last moments, "If heaven would give me but another five years . . . I might yet become a great painter." How great he really was the world has hardly yet discovered!

[1] "Fugaku Hiyakukei," or "The Hundred Views of Fuji." Trans., etc., by F. V. DICKINS. London, 1880.

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FROM THE "OCCUPATIONS OF WOMEN."

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Among the notable pupils of Hokusai we have already mentioned three, Bokusen Hokutei, Hoku-un, and Hokkei. The latter was in his book illustration so faithful to the traditions of his master as to publish a "Mangwa" of his own. It has much merit, but, as may be supposed, not a great deal of originality. He also illustrated a set of the "Lives of the Hundred and Eight Heroes," compiled by Tanekiyo, and published in 1856, and other books. His few broadsheets are in the style of the Osaka School, as is the case with those of other artists who adopted the prefix *Hok* or *Hoku* in order to do honour to the master. They are all considered in the chapter dealing with that class. He was also an excellent designer of *surimono*. Hokkei's date of birth was discovered by M. Gonse to be 1780; he died between 1856 and 1859.

Among other pupils of Hokusai, Teisai Hokuba is well worth mention. His name is given by M. de Goncourt as Arisakā Gorohati, and he also signed sometimes Shushunsai, or Teisai simply. His broadsheets—seldom met with—are in the style of Kunisada, and of little distinction; but as a book illustrator he is certainly of importance.

An example of his powers in this direction is given at p. 74. It displays very strongly the influence of his master, indeed, its only characteristic. Most of Hokusai's pupils adopted the mannerism which in him

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was a characteristic attempt at realism; but in their hands it simply became a convention, only differing in detail from those earlier established. The illustration is taken from a book[1] of moral stories called "Tea-chat in our Country Home." The Japanese gentleman who is responsible for this translation of the title has also favoured us with the following summary of the story to which our illustration belongs. "Picture of Suicide.—A rich merchant died, and his wife, who became widow and mother of a girl, was ill-hearted one. She re-married with a barber-man in secret, and treated the girl very severely. So the head-clerk, who was very honest man, planned wisely to drew the attention of the Police of that time by suisiding himself, not too heavy to kill himself but slightly safe enough. This called the attention, and the widow was taken before the judge and was sentenced to be driven away from her house. And the honest clerk took the property by command of the judge." It is a quaint incident, and doubtless the moral is convincing to Eastern minds; but one wonders what the ill-treated girl thought of the judge's decision.

Gakutei (also Harunobu II., Sada-oka, and Teikō) is said by Professor Anderson to have been a pupil of Katsugawa Shunshō; but by M. de Goncourt to have been a

[1] In the collection of Mr. Charles Holme.

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ILLUSTRATION FROM "THE HONEST CLERK."

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ILLUSTRATION TO A NOVEL.

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literary man who gave inspiration to Hokusai, and afterwards adopted art as his profession under the latter master. Whatever may be the fact, it is undeniable that his work shows Hokusai's influence to a noticeable extent, although it is combined with more independence than common among his contemporaries.

Gakutei ranks high, both as a designer of *surimono*, and as a book illustrator. At p. 74 we give an example from a novel[1] illustrated by him, which displays throughout a vigour of design and accuracy of drawing rare even among the best artists of his school; and at p. 140 a charming specimen[2] of the style by which he is best known. His work has a curious precision which is characteristic, and displays a quite extraordinary feeling for the capabilities of wood used as in Japan.

We have space for only a reference to the the other pupils of Hokusai. Most of them are discussed at greater length in Chapter VII., on the Osaka School, to which their work generally belongs. For the others, we may mention Shinsai, Katsushika Taito (a pupil named Kameya Kisaburo, to whom Hokusai gave this, one of his own signatures), and Yanagawa Shigenobu, his son-in-law.

[1] In the collection of Mr. Charles Holme.
[2] In the collection of Mr. Leicester Harmsworth.

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CHAPTER VI.

YEISEN, SHUNSEN, AND THEIR CONTEMPORARIES.

ONE of the few *nishiki-ye* makers into whose personality we gain any satisfactory insight is Shigeyoshi Genjirō, better known from his signature, Keisai Yeisen. He began life under favourable auspices, his father Ikeda Yoshikiyo being an artist of the Kano School—which seems to have been to some extent a connecting link between the classical arts of Japan and the democratic craft of the colour-printer—an author, and also a well-known connoisseur of the tea ceremony, in itself an indication of recognized good taste. In his early days Yeisen was well-to-do; his reputation has survived even to our day for his piety to his father and mother; and after their death it is recorded that he maintained three sisters. He was a native of Yedo, and at the outset he acquired some literary reputation as an author; then with Yeishi's pupil, Yeiji, as his companion, he studied the methods of the Tosa School of painting. Some three or four years he spent at Omi-

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no-kuni; afterwards settling at Yedo, on his return, as a designer—in the style of Hokusai—and colour-print artist. Herein he achieved a great success. His portraits of actors and beauties were in the manner popular at the time—a florid development of that of Utamaro and the later Torii artists, but his landscapes were entirely original and more highly appreciated by his contemporaries than they have yet been by Europeans. In this matter, however, a strong individuality began to display itself. Yeisen accepted a commission from a publisher—receiving payment in advance—for a series of views of Yedo, Kyōto, and Osaka, and executed part of the work. But before its completion, he entirely abandoned it, employing himself instead with designs for kites and other toys. His expressed reason, charmingly naïve, was that he objected strongly to becoming famous! It is to be said, nevertheless, that he spent all the money in a wild bout of dissipation; and his publisher finally found him in a house of ill-repute, severely and even dangerously intoxicated. After this escapade he left Yedo and went to Shiba Kawasuge, where he was entertained by Ikariya Rokubei, a wholesale fish-dealer, who was a great lover of colour-prints, and out of pure generosity befriended the artist. Here again, however, the temperament of the man broke out of all bounds. He borrowed money from his patron, entered

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on another debauch, and was discovered at the end of it to have even parted with every item of his garments. Next he was housed by patrons at Kisarazu, but with the same deplorable results. He returned to Yedo, but kept open house to the worst of company until his landlord, fearing for his own credit, turned him summarily out of doors. Then at last he reformed; married a second wife—the story is silent as to what had become of the first—and steadying himself to hard work, with only short and occasional lapses, soon amassed a competency. Again the curious intermixture of strength and weakness was conspicuous, for, saying that Fortune if tempted too long might go as easily as it had come, and that it was better for him to discharge his patrons than that by reason of old age or incapacity they should discharge him, he definitely ceased working and retired to private life (after 1830). His piety had never failed him: the Japanese story-teller relates that under no circumstances did he borrow from, or go into debt with, his relations or personal friends.

We have illustrated Yeisen somewhat liberally. His landscape work is referred to at length in the chapter on that subject, and in Chapter X. is also an example of a quite original treatment of the decorative label of the broadsheet, in a print selected from a series of scenes from the play of the

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PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

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"Forty-seven Rōnin." The two examples (at pp. 76 and 78), are probably some little time apart in date. The earliest is the head and shoulders of a coquettish young woman, a little in the large manner of Utamaro's later prints. It is simply entitled "Flirting." The seal below the signature is that of the artist, the oblong one that of the engraver, Izumiya Ichibei, while the small circle above the last mentioned is a stamp, of which the signification is simply *Gokujō*, "finest quality." Unfortunately there are few prints of any description without it, so no reliance can be placed on the announcement except in early cases, where it is found to have been roughly impressed (generally in red) by hand. The landscape is of course a view of Mount Fuji. The other print is a portrait of a well-known *geisha*, or singing-girl, the landscape being a scene at Tomioka. The publisher's mark is the well-known sign of Tsuta-ya, a view of whose shop is given at p. 67.

A pupil of Yeisen's may be shortly alluded to, as his prints are of sufficient merit and rarity to excite interest, viz., Teisai Senchō (Sogetsuyen). His private name was Yoshizō, and he is said to have achieved distinction as a book illustrator. It is, however, possible that this latter statement has arisen from some confusion with Teisai Hokuba, the pupil of Hokusai. Another artist, of whom no information has been

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attainable, but whose style is distinctly akin to that of Yeisen, is Kwasentei Tominobu.

Katsugawa Shunsen was very nearly contemporary with Yeisen, and in his figure subjects so nearly resembles the latter that he may well follow him for discussion. Shunsen's first master was a painter of the Chinese School, Tōrin, from whom he derived his earliest artist-name of Shunrin, his own name being Saijirō. Later in life he attached himself to Shunyei, adopting at that time the signature by which he is known. During the period Bunkwa (1804-17) he lived in the Shiba quarter of Yedo, and employed, among others, the engraver Yamadeiya Sanchirō. Afterwards he took the name of Shunkō,[1] and, abandoning the making of colour-prints, devoted himself entirely to pottery painting.

Shunsen's landscape we have dealt with elsewhere: his figure subjects, as has been said, are best comparable with those of Yeisen. They are, if anything, even more ornate—the pattern of the ladies' robes more sumptuous. Shunsen made a number of large size prints, consisting of two of the sheets of ordinary proportion joined endways, instead of, as usual, at the side, in order to complete a picture. This practice arose out of an earlier imitation of *kakemono*, the long, narrow panel sometimes printed

[1] He is thus known as Shunkō II., to distinguish him from the pupil of Shunshō.

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PORTRAIT OF A LADY.

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THE GATE OF THE TEMPLE OF ASAKUSA.

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from one block. The earliest specimen of this kind of colour-print—so daring and original a device—is, as far as the author's experience goes, by Suzuki Harunobu. Koriusai and Shunshō also used the form, and it grew in favour with Utamaro and his pupils. The later artists abandoned the finer form of the *hachirakaki*[1] (literally, narrow panel picture) for the two-sheet arrangement just described, and figured at p. 80. An excellent example of one of the old prints—they varied in length—is a print by the great artist Shikō already given.

Katsugawa Shunzan was a pupil of Shunyei, and, if we may judge from his style, an early contemporary, for no account of his life has yet transpired. We give here a specimen which will, however, show that this neglect is unmerited. The print there reproduced represents three ladies of quality, distinguished by their head-dresses, with a youth, a maid, and a man-servant carrying umbrellas, together with a woman and child of the lower class, outside the main entrance of the famous temple of Kwanon at Asakusa. Overhead is a great lantern, with the announcement of a festival, and on the right one of the *Ni-ō*, the images of the Deva kings, who

[1] The term *kakemono*, hanging picture, is restricted in its use to paintings, and should never be applied to colour-prints.

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keep guard at the outer gate of Buddhist temples to protect them from demons. The publisher's mark is that of Yeijudō. The original has about eight printings, and is finely coloured, an uncommon circumstance being the lavish use of block upon block; for instance, the hexagonal pattern, representing the cage in which the image is enclosed, is in the green of the railings, and overlies the whole of the space above them, except that occupied by the beams. The style closely resembles that of Kiyonaga. It is quite equal to good work by that artist, and, but for the signature, could with difficulty be distinguished therefrom.

Katsugawa Shuntei, another pupil of Shunyei, was also called Shōkōsai and Katsunami. He first illustrated books, but afterwards adopted the style of the Utagawas, and especially of Toyokuni; but he is related to have been a great invalid, and unable to do very much work. His prints, however, are by no means so rare as those of the last-named artist. That illustrated at p. 38 bears the mark of the publisher, Murataya.

The next illustration is a design of much vigour, by Hiroshige, the greatness of whose landscape work has somewhat dwarfed the merits of the other broadsheets executed by him. The difference of the signature from that found on any of the landscapes is very noticeable, and only adds to the difficulty of

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MOTHER AND CHILD.

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the problem, discussed at length in Chapter VIII., as to the identities of Hiroshige I. and Hiroshige II.

From its style and colour the example illustrated should not be later in date than 1820, too early, in fact, to be by the Hiroshige who was living in the Tokiwachō at Yedo from 1846 to 1849, who designed the "Hundred Views of Yedo" in 1856, and died on the sixth day of the ninth month in 1859, at the age of sixty-six. This Hiroshige's "Tōkaidō," moreover, was published after 1849, at a time when the scheme of colour in use for all broadsheets had undergone a radical change. And, to refer back to the period of our illustration, we may, in ascribing it, with the finer landscapes, to an earlier Hiroshige than we yet have precise knowledge of, recall the facts that the same man is said to have possessed four different private names, Munisada, Andō Tokitarō, Jiuzeimon, and Tokubei; to have studied the Kano School of painting before abandoning it for that of Toyohiro, who died in 1828; to have been a fireman, and also a juggler with coloured sand, before taking up colour-printing, which he is said to have done *late in life*: a string of statements hardly compatible with his alleged age and the existence of prints evidently contemporary with those of his master. I believe all details after about 1846—including the age at death—to relate to a

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second Hiroshige; and the earlier evidences to the artist who designed, among others, the set from which Plate VII. is reproduced.

We conclude our notice of this group of artists with illustrations of two prints by men as to whose identity there seems absolutely no clue whatever, but who both belong to the period 1800-20.

That at p. 84 bears the signature Soraku,[1] and would appear to be the work of a pupil of Utamaro. The subject is a well-known *geisha*, who is stringing the small drum used in dances, the inscription being a poem addressed to her. It has not been possible to identify the seal.

Of Ryōkōku, the designer of the print[2] reproduced next in order. It is one of a set representing the different occupations of women, and possibly others may contain additional signatures which would give a hint as to the artist. The style is that of Toyokuni's early pupils; the square seal a publisher's monogram, not identified, the round one the mark of "good quality" already alluded to. It has been suggested that this print was the work of an amateur. but the last-named seal shows, at all events, that it was intended for sale in the ordinary way.

At this point we may pause for a little in our consideration of the colour-prints to

[1] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.
[2] From the collection of Mr. Edgar Wilson.

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WOMAN WITH SMALL DRUM.

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devote some space to book illustrators who did not attempt the production of broad-sheets to any great extent.

We give here a quaint representation of

HOTEI. BY TSUKIOKA SETTEI, 1770.

Hotei, one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune,[1] who is especially associated with the virtue of contentment. It is from a collection of the works of famous Chinese and Japanese artists, copied by Hokyō (a

[1] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

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title of honour) Tsukioka Settei, and published in 1770.

To this period belong several notable names. Toriyama Sekiyen Toyofusa will be remembered as the master of Utamaro as well as of other artists. He himself was a student of the Kano School, who adopted the principles of the *Ukiyo-ye*. Professor Anderson mentions three important books illustrated by him, "Toriyama Sekiyen gwafu" (1774), "Gwa-jiki-hen" (1777), and "Zokku-hiakki," a book of goblins (1779).

Kitao Shigemasa (Kosiusai) is a contemporary of the last named. In addition to the illustration of books of "Social Customs and Scenes from the Yoshiwara," his "Yehon Yaso Ujikawa," "Famous Heroes of China and Japan" (1786), and "Yehon Komagadake," "Famous Horses with their Owners" (1802), are drawn with power and spirit. We reproduce at p. 24 a specimen of his chromo-xylographic work, quaint and rather distinctive in style. It is printed in low tones from few blocks. Shigemasa died in 1819 at the age of eighty. It is to be remarked that M. de Goncourt considers him, with Kiyonaga, to have exercised the greatest influence in the formation of Utamaro's style.

A pupil of the latter, Kitao Masanobu, executed a series of illustrations of the "Beauties of the Yoshiwara," printed in

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BUNREI

CRANE.

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colours, which is one of the most beautiful books ever produced in Japan, and in 1770 Tachibana Minkō illustrated a valuable series of pictures of artisans engaged in their various crafts, "Saigwa Shokunin Barui." The edition of this work on large paper is a treasure any collector may be proud of.

The example shown at p. 86 is from a series of studies of birds and plants by Bunrei and his pupils, published at Yedo in 1778.

It is, from the historical point of view, important to mention Shiba Gokan, a pupil of Harunobu, because he is said to have first introduced copper-plate engraving into Japan, having learned the art from a Dutch resident. He is also reputed to have been the "first Japanese who made use of the elements of linear perspective in pictorial art; but his education was very imperfect. He died in 1818 at the age of seventy-one."[1]

Keisai Kitao Masayoshi, a book illustrator of considerable note, was a son of Shigemasa and an associate of Hokusai in the early days of the latter. He is one of the leading exponents of a style of illustration which has scarcely yet received sufficient notice. The method of working of this school is curiously modern; the main outlines are barely indicated by a few bold strokes, a mere suggestion of colour applied

[1] ANDERSON, British Museum Catalogue, p. 345.

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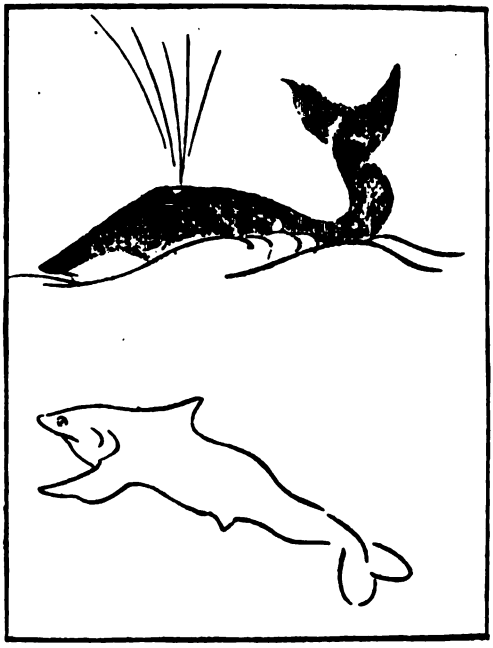
in one or two tints obtains what one may perhaps venture to term an impressionistic effect of absolute realism. The symbols ordinarily used by Japanese artists are entirely absent, and the work of this group of artists is, allowing for the difference of



FISH. BY KITAO MASAYOSHI, 1797.

race, comparable to nothing so closely as the cartoons made by Steinlen and Balluriau for "Gil Blas Illustré."

Kitao Masayoshi published numerous books before his death in 1824, the best of which are mentioned by Professor Anderson.

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STREET SCENE. EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.

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A STREET MERCHANT.

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We give above a sketch by him; it is very slight, but must be considered in connection with the illustrations of the same style and period by Kōchō and Chinnen[1] (p. 88). The three together should convey some idea of the salient points of this manner. The first was engraved by Shumpūdō Nojiro Ryūko, and published at Yedo in 1797.

Oishi Matora died in 1833 at the age of forty-one. Among other works he illustrated the first volume of a charming and well-known publication entitled "Jinji Andō," a collection of sketches intended as designs for the square-sided lanterns used in procession at Shintō festivals. The work consists of five volumes, the others being by Kuniyoshi (vol. ii.), Keisai Yeisen (vols. iii., v.), and Kuninao (vol. iv.) It was issued at Nagoya, 1829-47, and is printed from three blocks, black, blue, and a brilliant red.

It has already been pointed out that these artists were in most cases artisans, and a note on their book-illustration would be incomplete without a reference to the designs produced by them for the use of their fellows of other crafts. Of these the most noteworthy are undoubtedly the various publications of woodcuts from the designs of the great lacquer artist Kōrin (died in 1716, aged fifty-six). Professor Anderson enumerates[2] several of these, and we re-

[1] From the collection of Mr. Charles Holme

[2] ANDERSON, British Museum Catalogue, p. 405.

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produce below an example from the collection published in 1815 at Yedo by Hō-itsu, on the hundredth anniversary of the artist's death, the second day of the sixth month.

DESIGN FOR LACQUER. BY HŌ-ITSU, AFTER KŌRIN.

Two supplementary volumes were issued in 1826.

Hō-itsu, says our authority, was a son of the Daimyo, Sakai Uta no Kami, and chief priest of the Nishi Hongwanji temple at Kyōto, who, after having studied all the

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ROSE: FROM AN EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BOTANICAL BOOK.

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existing schools, undertook the foundation of a new Kōrin Academy. He published three collections of the designs of Kōrin, and himself produced many pictures in the same style, which could scarcely be considered inferior to those of the master. He attracted some clever pupils to the cause, and has succeeded in rescuing from comparative oblivion one of the most original and characteristic of the branches of Japanese pictorial art. He died in 1828, at the age of sixty-seven.

We have already referred in Chapter I. to the designs for *kimono* published in 1667. A somewhat similar book was issued by Nakajima Tanjirō at Naniwa in 1730. Hokusai, Yeisen, Kitao Masayoshi, and Hiroshige all made similar collections; we give a design, in the original printed in colours, by the latter. On p. 91 also, an arrangement of roses, as a design for lacquer-work, will have an interest for students of botany, inasmuch as it is reproduced from a book[1] published in the early part of the century, some considerable time before that flower is commonly said to have been introduced into Japan. A book that is notable not only for the excellence of its design but also for the beauty of its colouring, is entitled "Kwakuzen Zuko," a series of Korean and Japanese patterns for the

[1] From the collection of Mr. Charles Holme.

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HIROSHIGE I.

FLORAL DESIGN.

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decoration of soft leather used to line armour. It was compiled and published by Ikeda Yoshinobu in 1845, and has already for some years been well used by English designers.

In conclusion, a word may be given to the little volumes containing collections of crests and diaper patterns engraved on metal plates, issued about 1881 by Shimabara, Murakami, and others. They are easily procured in London at very low prices, and should be of great use to designers.

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CHAPTER VII.

THE OSAKA SCHOOL AND LATER ARTISTS.

ABOUT the beginning of the century there arose at Osaka a school of broadsheet artists with curious and well-defined characteristics, easily distinguishing them from the various styles used by their contemporaries at Yedo and Kyōto. It is not possible to do more than attempt a theoretical solution of the causes to which this group owes its origin and peculiarities, for in no single instance has it been possible to obtain for this book, any detailed information as to the lives and circumstances of the artists concerned, except in instances which, so far as the broadsheets are affected, do not help us in the least.

These prints were produced during the period from 1820 to about 1860. The differences of technique manifested are described in Chapter IX, but for convenience we again state shortly that they consist mainly of a certain hardness of style and crudeness of colour, combined frequently with an employment of metallic lustres suggesting that found in *surimono*. There is

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KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ

ACTORS IN CHARACTER.

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generally a greater reliance on the mechanical, rather than the artistic powers of the printer.

Another noticeable feature is an absence of individuality. Were these prints without signature, one would be inclined to class them as the work of two or three artists at the most. All the designers seem to have been completely enslaved by a uniform style — it may, perhaps, have been by a local fashion. Their names suggest many and varied influences, for among them are pupils of Hokusai, Toyokuni, Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, and, above all, Shunshō. In the last case there is too wide a chronological interval for the connection to have been immediate. That we should look to Shunshō, however, for the original inspiration of the manner is, I think, indisputable; but it is probably by way of his pupils, Shunkō and Shunyei. In order that a good idea may be formed of the resemblance of the style of the great master to that of a typical Ōsaka artist, we place in this chapter, rather than in that devoted to him, a reproduction of a print[1] by Shunshō, with which should be compared the succeeding illustration[2] by Ashikuni. The method of treatment is practically identical, allowing for the difference of skill and superior refinement of the former. The latter is a representation of

[1] From the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.
[2] From the collection of Mr. Edgar Wilson.

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the two actors, Arashi Kichisaburō and Kataoka Nizeyeimon (holding the sword) in the play Igago-ī. It is engraved by Shio-chō.

Our next plate, by a pupil of Hokusai, Hokuyei, has rather the style and manner of the early followers of Toyokuni than that which the artist's name would lead us to expect. It is signed Shunkōsai Hokuyei, and represents the actors Nakamura Utazemon and Arashi Rikan in a theatrical scene. The publisher's name is Honya Seibei. The perspective of the receding bridge is a noticeable feature of this composition.

Hokuyei also made use of the signatures Shumbaisai, Shumbaitei, and Sekkwaro, often signing his prints Shunkōsai simply, and in some instances "Shunkōsai, pupil of Shunshō." In fact, the signatures on the Osaka broadsheets all point in the direction we have suggested. Thus Hokusai's other pupils who worked in this style may usefully be enumerated with the prefixes made use of by them. They are Shunyōsai Hokkei, Shunshosai Hokuchō, Shunshosai Hokuyu, Hokumei (or Togetsu), Shunkōsai Hokumyō (Sekkōtei), Shunshisai Hokusei (Hokkai), and Shunkōsai Hokushu.

At p. 98 is a curious print by Ashiyuki, valuable because it contains a date, 1824, and a record of the circumstances under which it was made, as a special gift to a

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ACTORS IN CHARACTER.

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A THEATRICAL SCENE.

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friend of the artist's. Ashiyuki called himself also Kegwadō and Kegyokudō. His prints are not very rare.

Of the work of pupils of Kunisada we give two examples. The first is a picture of an actor in the character of a noble. It is finely drawn, but there is no attempt at representing perspective, although Sadahiro, the designer, must have been quite contemporary with Hokuyei. The curious cloud-like convention, apparently introduced only to help the composition, is noteworthy. The seal is that of the artist himself.

Following this is a finely-planned design by Sadamasa, interesting both as an example of costume, and on account of the vase with a flower arrangement, after one of the strict classical methods fully described by Mr. Conder in his exhaustive work on the subject.

Our last illustration (p. 132) of the work of this school is from a broadsheet by Hirosada, who must not be confused with the painter of that name. It is perhaps somewhat later in date than either of the preceding; the colours are more vivid and less harmonious, but it is not unsuccessfully conceived, and is curious in theme. The harpy-like figure is a Buddhist angel, arrayed in the *higorōmō*, or robe of iridescent feathers, assumed by these beings when they visit the earth.

It is to be hoped that additional information may be forthcoming as to this interesting group. We have only been able in the

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space at our command to allude to a few representatives of the large number of artists composing it. Collectors must be warned that among them are to be found followers of several of the more famous *nishiki-ye* designers, bearing the names of their predecessors; we may point out, as instances, the existence of Osaka broadsheets signed Shunshō and Shunkō (a pupil of Hokushu), which an unscrupulous dealer might succeed in palming off as late work of the greater men. But, apart from any historical value, the school has produced many prints of average merit, and few which are worthless. If its artists never rose to the dignity of their masters, at least they never sank so low as to bring discredit on them.

The later artists, other than those of the Osaka School, are almost all direct followers either of Kunisada or Kuniyoshi. Of the former, prints by Kunichika are frequently met with. They are principally theatrical scenes, or landscapes with processions, gaudily coloured, confused in composition, aad altogether inferior to the works of the men they obviously imitate. Kunichika worked about 1845-65. His family name was Arakawa Yasohachi.

Kunisada II. also imitated the later style of his master, and belongs to about the same period as Kunichika. He used sometimes the prefix Baichōrō, and is the same with Kunimasa.

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ASHIYUKI

AN ACTOR.

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ACTOR IN CHARACTER OF A NOBLE.

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More important than either of these artists is Utagawa Sadahide. He executed some very fair landscapes with battles, not inharmoniously arranged. His colour is also better than that of the two last-named artists. Sadahide, in collaboration with Kunisada, Kunitsuna, Kuniteru, Kunimasa, Kunitoshi, and Kunitaki illustrated a child's version of the story "Hakkenden," by Bakin, published in a set of more than fifty-four volumes in 1849. He also used the names Gountei and Gyokuransai. Colour-prints by each of the above-named artists are common, but of small importance. The old tradition was now nearly exhausted, and it is only occasionally that we find a battle-piece or legendary scene either well enough executed, or of sufficient interest on account of its subject, to merit particular attention.

Here and there, however, such do exist, and the print reproduced at p. 100 is illustrative of a story so often met with that we have chosen it as a type of what may be looked on as the best achievement of the later artists. It is by Ichimōsai Yoshitora, also called Kinchōrō, one of the best pupils of Kuniyoshi. The subject is the death of Nitta Yoshisada, one of the heroes of the great internal war between Ashikaga and the Emperor Gō-Daigō, in the fourteenth century, to which the name of the "War of the Chrysanthemums" has been given. Nitta

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had already vainly challenged Ashikaga to decide the quarrel by single combat, and so save the nation from the misery of war. "In 1338,[1] on the second day of the seventh month, while marching with about fifty followers to assist in investing a fortress in Echizen, he was suddenly attacked in a narrow path in a rice-field near Fukui by about 3,000 of the enemy, and exposed, without shields, to a shower of arrows. Someone begged Nitta, as he was mounted, to escape. 'It is not my desire to survive my companions slain,' was his response. Whipping up his horse, he rode forward to engage with his sword, making himself the target for a hundred archers. His horse, struck when at full speed by an arrow, fell. Nitta, on clearing himself and rising, was hit between the eyes with a white-feathered shaft, and mortally wounded. Drawing his sword, he cut off his own head—a feat which the warriors of that time were trained to perform—so that his enemies might not recognize him. He was thirty-eight years old. The enemy could not recognize Nitta, until they found, beneath a pile of corpses of men who had committed *harakiri*, a body on which, enclosed in a damask bag, was a letter containing the imperial commission in Gō-Daigō's handwriting, 'I invest you with all power to subjugate the rebels.' Then they knew the corpse to be

[1] GRIFFIS, "The Mikado's Empire," p. 189.

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AN ACTOR IN CHARACTER.

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that of Nitta. His head was carried to Kyōto, then in possession of Ashikaga, and exposed in public on a pillory." A legendary version of the story relates that after Nitta had beheaded himself, his horse carried the body, still seated in the saddle, back to his camp, and so brought the news of the disaster. In the illustration Nitta is fighting on the left—breaking the arrows of the enemy by his skilful swordsmanship. His horse is already killed, and the last of his faithful band are being cut down by Koyamado Tarō, the leader of the attacking party. To commemorate the hero's death, the Japanese government has recently erected a magnificent temple on the spot. It is of interest to remark here, that the "Story of the Forty-seven Rōnin" is, in the dramas derived from it, dated back to this period, and the identification of Nitta's helmet forms one of the *motifs* of the play.

We may mention, in addition to Yoshitora, two others, Yoshikazu, who designed landscapes and caricatures, and Yoshimori, whose processions and battle-pieces are also worthy of remark.

Yoshitoshi, another pupil of Kuniyoshi, has worked up to the seventies, and displays the lowest depth to which the old manner fell, as well as the beginning of that ghost of it now produced. For since about 1870 colour-prints sometimes gracefully drawn, often prettily coloured, have been produced

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in Japan. The dramatic tradition is dead, apparently, for these are chiefly illustrations either of fairy tales or of battle scenes. The colours are European aniline dyes, the cutting of the blocks shallow and without vigour. Still there is, as we said above, a certain attractive prettiness, and even these feeble imitations have somehow a greater feeling of more solidity of craftsmanship than much European contemporary work of the same kind.

During this period of decline, there are yet one or two artists worthy to rank with those who had gone before. Kikuchi Yōsai, called also Takiyasu, a painter of the Shijō (or Naturalistic) School published in 1836 his "Zenken Kojitsu,"—portraits of Japanese celebrities in the costume of their period. Yōsai died in 1878, aged ninety-one. Professor Anderson[1] says his "drawings . . . . are superior in refinement and truth to anything of the kind produced by Hokusai or his school. The portraitures of Yōsai were actually types of the patrician order, while those of the popular artists were either purely imaginary, like the women of Utamaro, or modelled upon stage impersonations, adjusted to the tastes of an audience from which, unfortunately, all the representatives of culture and gentle birth were excluded by the social law of the age." It

[1] Portfolio Monograph, "Japanese Wood-Engravings," p. 58.

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may be doubted if the abstractions of Utamaro, and theatrical masks or "make-up," can be quite fairly said to cover all the face-types of the works of artists of the Popular School. The Japanese face varies much more than we are inclined at first to realize with the above exceptions, and allowing for

SILHOUETTE PORTRAIT OF AN ARTISAN. 1833.

the convention—not of expression, but of technique—there are few human representations in the works of the best colour-print artists or book illustrators for which sufficient authority might not be found. On this subject we may refer to the silhouette portrait from a collection made privately, and published for a club of artisans at Yedo in 1833.[1]

[1] From the collection of Mr. R. Phené Spiers, F.R.I.B.A.

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Sho-fu Kiosai is described by Professor Anderson as "the only genuine successor of the master (Hokusai) in his comic vein, and, although inferior to him in genius and industry, he displays not only a rollicking originality of motive, that perhaps occasionally smacks of the *saké* cup, but is gifted with a rapid, forcible, and graceful touch, and a power of realizing action that would do no discredit to the best pages of the "Mangwa." He was born in 1831, and died in 1891 or 1892. A fine collection of his sketches is preserved in the Musée Guimet at Paris, and in his book, "Promenades Japonaises," Mons. Guimet gives an account of his interesting personality. His illustrated books are easily obtained, and are worth studying as examples of the effect of European influence on Japanese training. In 1887 appeared the "Kiōsai Gwaden," in four volumes, illustrated by him under the name of Kawanabe Tōyoku, two volumes being devoted to an account of the styles of various artists, and two to a history of his own life. It was written by Uriu Masakazu and published at Tōkyō.

Another remarkable book of our own time is the "Bairei Hyakuchō Gwafu," or "Pictures of the Hundred Birds," by Kōno Bairei, published also at Tōkyō in 1881 in three volumes, a supplementary series, also in three volumes, following it in 1884. These

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THE DEATH OF NITTA YOSHISADA.

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designs are perhaps the best illustrations of bird-life ever cut on wood. They are printed each from six or seven blocks, the shading even of the drawing being to some extent thus provided for, instead of having been left to the skill of the printer. The original drawings were not destroyed, and, with specimens of the wood-blocks, were fortunately secured by Mr. T. Armstrong for the South Kensington Museum, where they are now exhibited. Bairei issued another book in similar style, called "Inaka-no-Tsuki" in 1889, and died in 1895.

In 1890-91, Watanabe Seitei, an artist still young in years, designed and printed a charming collection of flowers and birds in the modern manner, very delicately drawn and coloured. And in 1894 a number of the "Bijutsu Sekai," a Japanese monthly art journal, was devoted to a selection from his work, engraved by Gotō Tokujirō, and printed by Yoshida Ichimatsu. The books by the two last-named artists are the best productions of living men which have so far been seen in this country, although the series of fairy tales, printed and published by the Kobunsha at Yedo, 1885, etc., have been a joy and delight to English children now for several years.

One may be permitted a concluding word, in a volume devoted to "illustration," on the rapid development of process work in Japan. The "Kokkwa," an encyclopædia

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of Japanese art, still in progress, is illustrated with chromo-lithographs at least equal to anything ever done in Europe. Ogawa, of Tōkyō, also, is producing collotypes which will easily hold their own in any market, and ordinary half-tone blocks are also made which are in every way respectable.

The fact is that the Japanese have the instinct of handicraft. They have the manual tradition of generations of skilled workers, and being in no wise deficient in intelligence, they are able to adopt our tools, and apply to their use, qualities far higher than those possessed by the average European mechanic. It has yet to be admitted that Japan is England's most dangerous rival in commerce. With her magnificent artistic training, she can, if she will, beat us from the field of skilled craftsmanship altogether.

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CHAPTER VIII.

LANDSCAPE.

THE treatment of landscape by Chinese and Japanese artists is a subject which demands special consideration; so different in all details is it from the practice of any other school of painting or design in the history of the world's art. To go minutely into a discussion of its qualities and technique is beyond the scope of the present volume; but for a proper understanding of that branch thereof which immediately concerns us—landscape as interpreted by the designers for woodcuts—some short statement of the general methods of painters becomes quite advisable.

The first point which strikes a European critic is the difference of opinion between Eastern and Western painters as to what constitutes a finished picture. The former artists, both Chinese and Japanese, never fill the whole of their panel with colour. They are content, whether in the imaginary compositions of the classical schools, or the realistic studies of those academies

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which went to Nature for their motives, to to represent only the more salient points of the scene: a foreground of plants or animals, an effect of broken colour on a river, a line of hills dying away into the distance. The selection so made has in detail all the qualities of what we term "impressionism." A largeness of view, boldness of handling, and neglect of all limitations which might interfere with the realization of the painter's aim, are almost invariably met with. The composition can generally be described only as an arrangement of balanced colour. The perspective is quite arbitrary and subordinate to other purposes. The colour itself is harmonious and subtle in the extreme; and the general effect often entirely convincing, in spite of the obvious devices of its construction.

But when we come to consider engraved landscape, we find that the tyranny of a new technique produces some unexpected developments. Using the language of the designer, one may say that the "spotting," so noticeable in the paintings almost disappears; and in its place is found a finer sense of composition, more nearly akin to our own comprehension of that quality.

The necessities of the woodcut also called for an even greater simplicity in the drawing of detail; while the limitations of the printer forced the artist to rely for his tones on boldly contrasted masses of colour

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rather than on subtle and exquisite handling. The treatment of the sky is, as one of the best of our modern critics[1] of painting puts it, "usually a pure formula. . . . The profundity of night no more than a fine agreement of dark colours; the imperceptible vanishings and the infinite vistas of embowered landscape, a calculated play between two or three tones." Nothing else indeed is possible with the tools employed; and the writer above quoted is compelled to grant to these landscapes—most charmingly against his will—credit for "a very piquant shorthand rendering of natural effect." This is absolutely true, however unsympathetically worded. For, with his simple masses of colour, his arbitrary selection of line, his naïve formula for light and shade, the colour-print artist is yet able to convince you irresistibly of the poetic truth of his thought. You see the wind rolling in waves over a paddy-field—the tenderness of evening light fading behind a line of distant hills—the great cone of Fuji rising like a strong prayer above the busy town—the river at night with its dim boats and the twinkle of innumerable lanterns on the bridge. You see all these things—juggled if you will—openly before your eyes—and then may well ask if our landscape painters, with their laborious technique and infinite

[1] Mr. R. A. M. Stevenson, in the "Pall Mall Gazette" of the 24th January, 1896.

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knowledge, can give you half the truth and poetry of these simple woodcuts, wrought by artisans who only understood their own powers and did not try to go beyond them.

Of the colour-print artists who practised landscape, four are especially pre-eminent. Shunsen made dainty impressionist sketches in rose-pink, green, brown and purple. Hokusai also, whose views of Yedo, views of Mount Fuji and of famous bridges and waterfalls of Japan—masterly in composition, original in colour scheme—stand quite apart from all other work of their kind, and merit a detailed and exclusive examination on their own account; and lastly, two artists named Hiroshige, who are perhaps the most characteristic of all.

There has been much confusion in dealing with the productions of these latter artists. Professor Anderson—the highest authority in this kingdom on Japanese painting—refers a mass of work to one man only, and mentions a later disciple, whom he calls Hiroshige II. I am inclined to think that this man is certainly the third of the name. At all events he is so entirely inferior and imitative that he may be dismissed from the case.

Professor Anderson states that Hiroshige died in 1858 at the age of sixty-one; that he only became a colour-print artist late in life, and that previously he was a fireman. The Japanese current tradition is that this was

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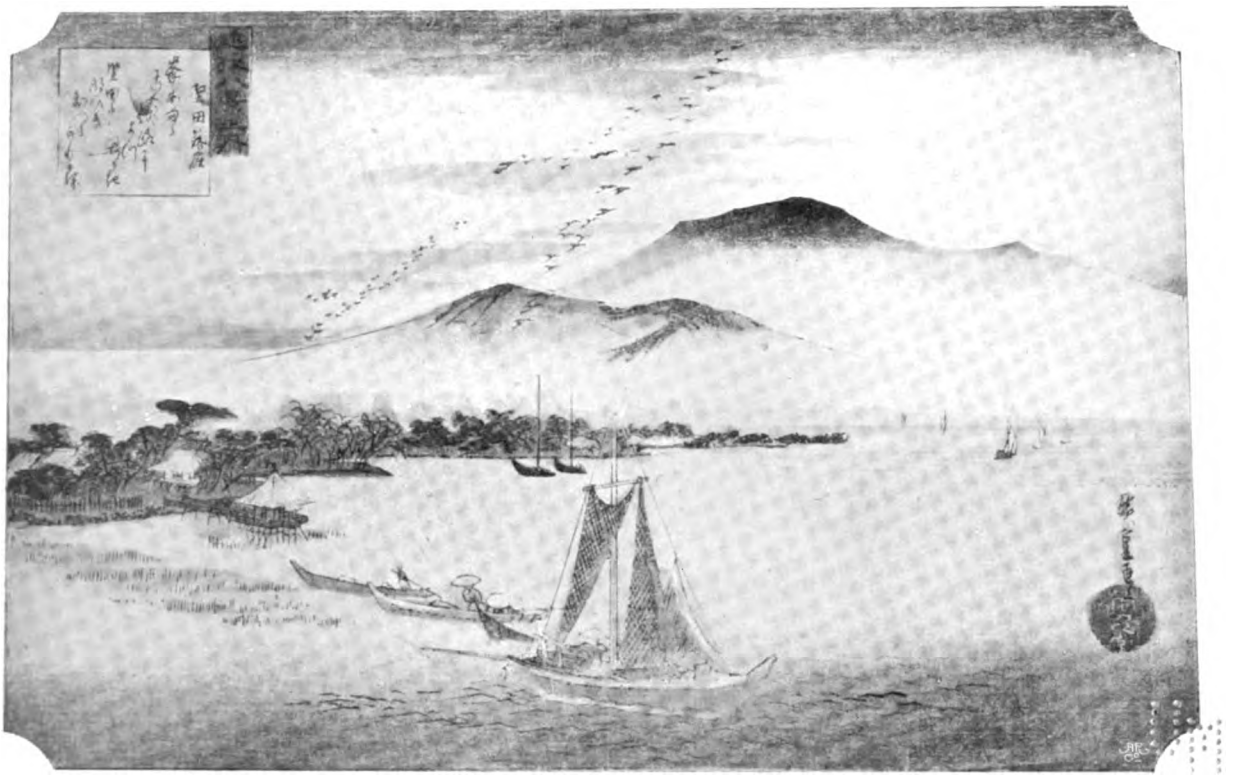

VIEW ON LAKE BIWA.

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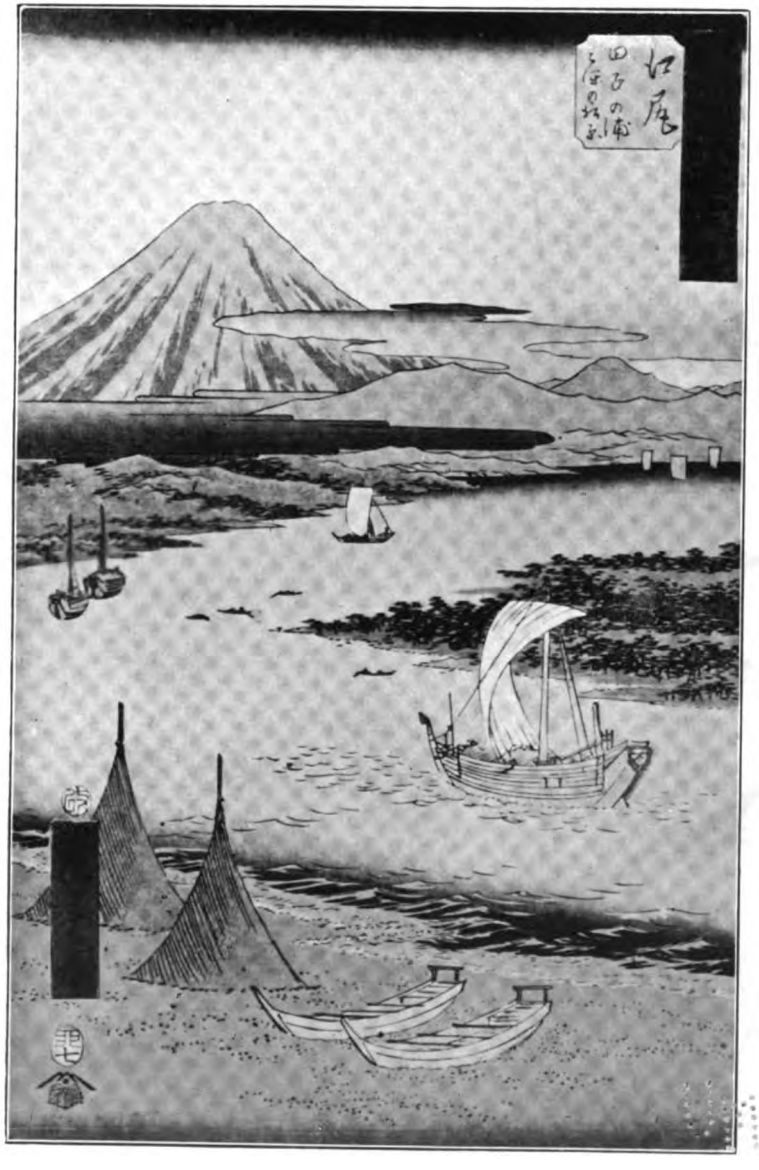

VIEW NEAR YEDO.

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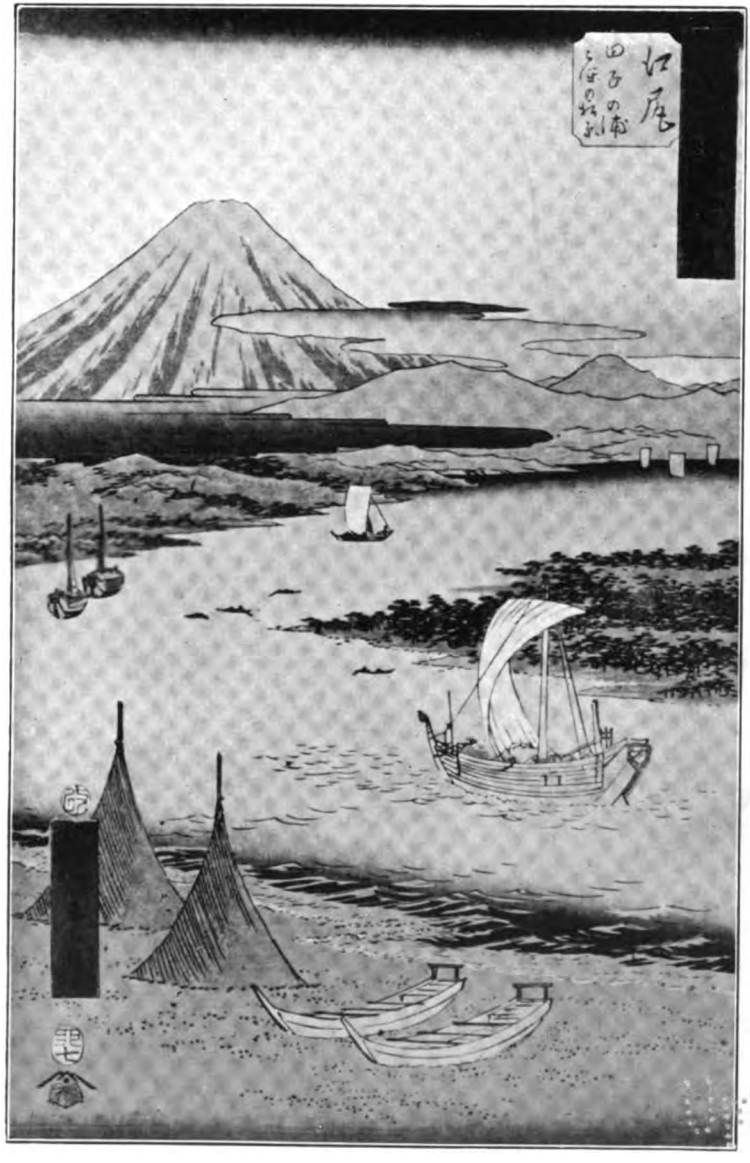

VIEW NEAR YEDO.

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really the second Hiroshige. It is certain that it was he who made the upright picture illustrated at p. 110, which is from a series only published in 1853; and it will, I think, be seen that there is a difference, as compared with preceding example, in treatment and signature hardly explainable by old age. It is said also that the first Hiroshige—to whom these horizontal compositions are attributed—gained his living in early life by juggling—so to speak—with coloured sand, making pictures therewith on an adhesive ground for the amusement of passers-by. One Hiroshige was certainly a pupil of Toyohiro who died in 1828, too early perhaps for it to have been the later artist. On the whole, I am inclined to follow the Japanese version, and make a division of the work on the lines indicated, most of the horizontal plates going to the earlier, and all the vertical to the later artist. The signatures also are of two invariable types—a point of importance when a uniform method of treatment is always found to accompany each signature, and this proves almost conclusively, I think, the existence of two individuals. (See also Chapter VI.)

Hiroshige I. designed a few figure pieces —actors, fair women, and the like; but in such he is surpassed by many contemporaries. His genius was for landscapes; and, on his own ground, he has no superior. His subjects are all selected from the neigh-

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bourhood of Yedo; views of that city, of the Tōkaidō (the famous road therefrom to Kyōto), of Mount Fuji. These he has illustrated over and over again, with ever varying selection of the point of view, and of incident. His methods have all the simplicity of a master, and every fault known to European canons of criticism. His results are absolutely truthful, though each step in the process leading to them is a self-evident fiction.

Hiroshige the first has been allotted the doubtful credit of having made "attempts to carry out the rudimentary laws of linear perspective." The fact seems to be that both the Hiroshige knew all the perspective necessary for their purpose. They also knew, as a rule, when to ignore it. I have an early print by the second of the name, which gives a view of a street in Yedo; leading, in defiance of most rules of academic composition, from the foreground, quite symmetrically away to the distance at right angles to the plane of the picture. It is evening, and lights glow from the quaint two-storied houses on either side, while the street traffic has dwindled away to a few scattered groups. All this in the half light, but above the bank of cloud which shrouds the town in shadow, the great cone of Mount Fuji, snow-clad, and still gleaming in the bright light, stands white against the crimson of the setting sun.

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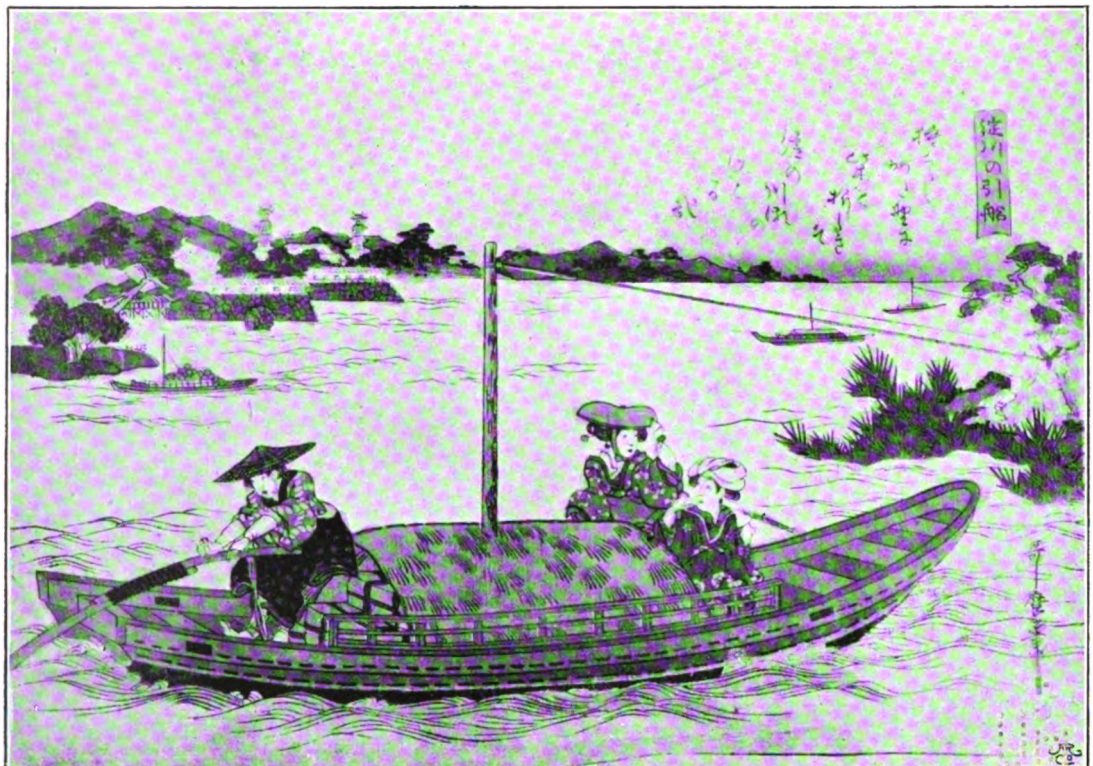

YODO CASTLE ON THE YODO RIVER.

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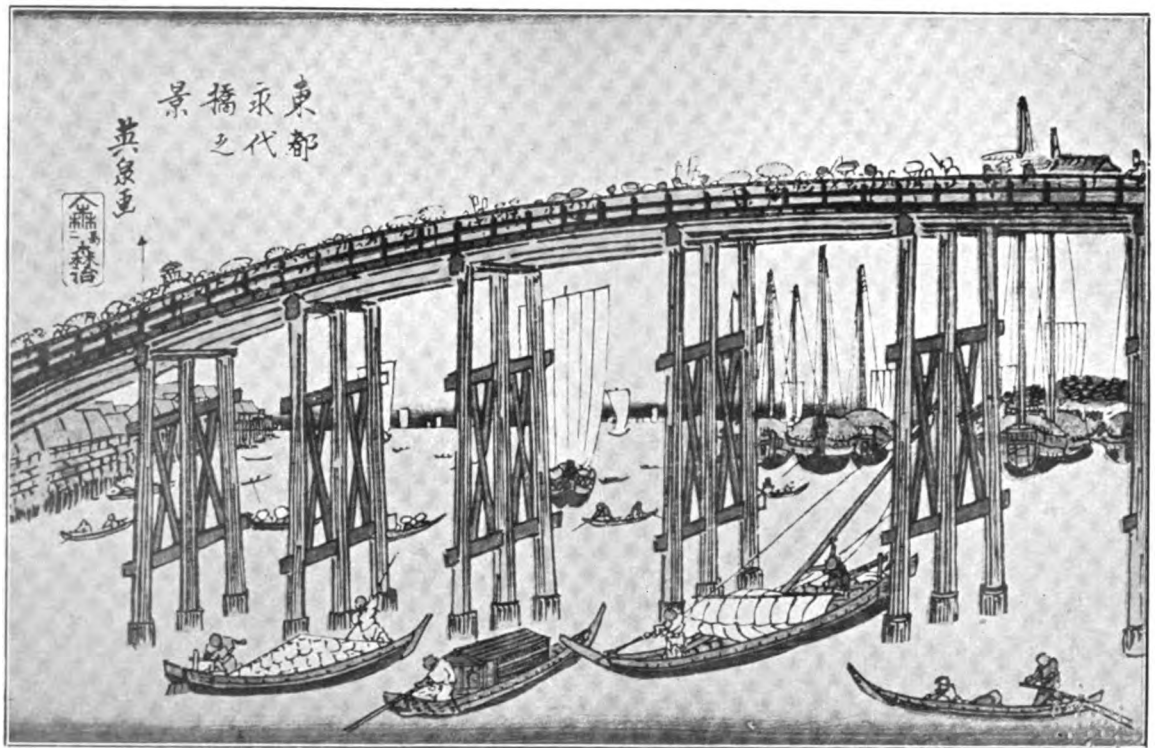

RIVER SCENE.

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It is one of the most poetical designs I have ever seen, and I refer to it now because, given a point of view at an altitude well above the house-tops, the perspective is practically perfect.

But although overshadowed by the landscape work of Hokusai and the Hiroshige, there are many fine prints of this class of subject by artists whose fame rests on widely different lines. At p. 112 is the reproduction of a view of Yodo castle on the Yodo river, with a peasant's boat in the foreground, which proves that Utamaro also could deal wisely with other subjects than fair women. Toyokuni I. also produced a set of landscapes which, though rare, is not of high merit; but Keisai Yeisen in his "Bridge over the River" (p. 112), shows great power and much modernity of feeling, if one may justly use the expression; and in the view of Mount Fuji which forms a background of a scene from the drama of the Forty-seven Rōnin, he also displays a fine sense of effective simplicity. This series of twelve plates is one rarely seen; but should perhaps rank as one of Yeisen's greatest achievements. Yeisen also made a good set of views of waterfalls, in imitation of his master Hokusai.

At p. 114 is a reproduction of the left-hand portion of a three-sheet print by Sadahide, one of the eight famous views of Lake Biwa —a subject dealt with also by Hiroshige I.

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in one of his most successful moods as well as by other artists. This print is interesting as showing a deliberate attempt at European perspective in the temple behind the hill; in colour it is sombre, red, brown, and dark blue predominating, but it is a strong and effective picture as a whole. Before leaving the subject of Lake Biwa, it is worth while to allude to the Japanese tradition, that as Mount Fuji rose in one night, so also the ground sank in the province of Omi in the same space of time, and the lake, so-called from its fancied resemblance in form to the musical instrument of the name, was formed.

A view near Yedo follows, designed by Shigenobu, the son-in-law of Hokusai (see Chapter V.). It is a pleasantly composed picture of promenaders in the season of cherry-blossom, imitative, as might be expected, of Hiroshige I. to some extent. Of another pupil of Hokusai, Hokusui, we reproduce a strong impressionistic picture (p. 116), in which the strife of rain-storm and cloud, and the rush of a river in flood are rendered with telling effect. The scene is one of a set of a hundred views of Kyōtō and the neighbourhood, and is by no means common. Of Hokusui himself no biographical details are as yet known.

In this place we may note a curious instance of unscrupulous "pot boiling." Kunisada published, about 1840, a set of

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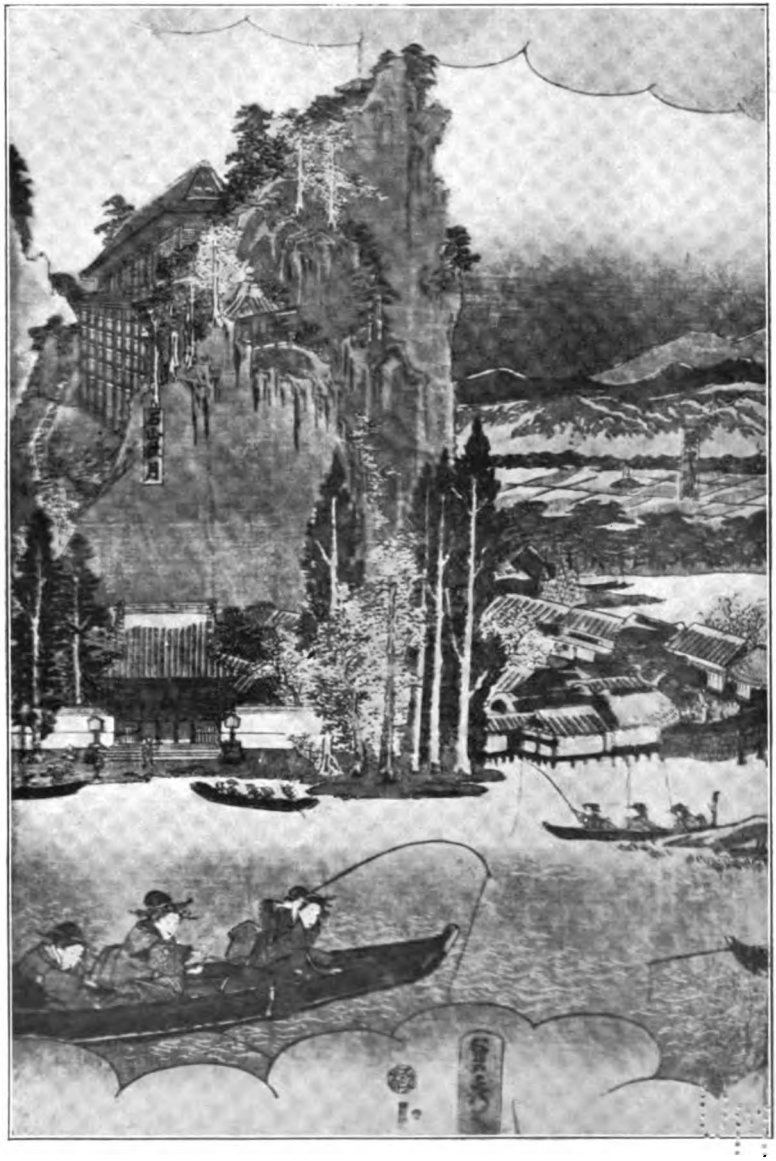

VIEW ON LAKE BIWA (THIRD SHEET).

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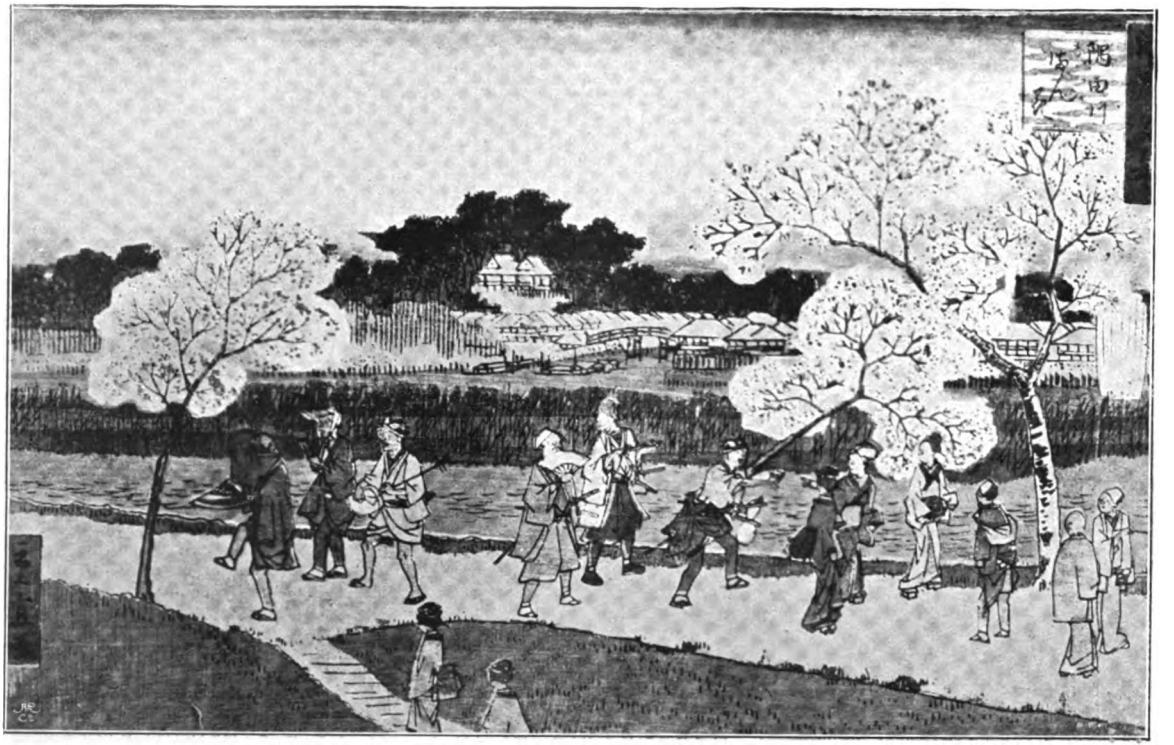

THE SEASON OF CHERRY BLOSSOM.

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views of the Tōkaidō, each with a female figure in different costume. These views are coarsely copied from the best-known set of the Tōkaidō by Hiroshige I., and the fact furnishes another evidence of their popularity.

Kuniyoshi, however, was more than a mere copyist of landscape. Although few prints of this kind by him are met with, those we have show a rather high order of merit. He worked in the style of the Hiroshige to some extent. His set of views of Yedo is remarkable in many respects; a view of two temples, the projecting eave of one cleverly foreshortened from the immediate foreground on the left, being particularly noteworthy for its fineness of drawing. His effects of water are also good.

To the other broadsheet artists who produced landscapes we can here devote only space for bare mention. They worked in the style of the second Hiroshige, obtaining with crude colours a certain brilliancy of effect which is sometimes happy. The chief of them were perhaps Chikamaro and a few of the pupils of Kuniyoshi, especially Yoshitora, Yoshitoshi, and Yoshitsuya.

In the production of illustrated books of landscape, Hokusai was, of course, superior to all other artists of Japan; but it has been found more convenient to treat of this class of his work in the chapter specially devoted to him. His pupil, Gakutei, also

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attained considerable distinction in this direction, and we reproduce a view of Mount Fuji from the "Sansui Gwajō," published by him at Nagoya in the early part of this century. A notable series of landscapes owes its origin to what one may fairly call the Impressionist School of Japan, among the artists of which Kochō is pre-eminent. In these the curious conventional bars of pink used by Hokusai and others (possibly to represent mist, or perhaps only to secure a correct aerial perspective) are ignored; the principal object is dashed in with a few lines and faintly tinted, while a minimum of accessories of any sort is introduced. The result is often charming, and the first edition of the "Kōchō Gwafu," published in 1817, is a book to be prized by the collector for its own sake. We give an example of the school (p. 120) by Hosai.

The last group of works dealing with landscape to which we have space for reference is that of the "Meisho Zûye," or illustrated guide books. These made their appearance about 1680 (Anderson), but attained their highest excellence in the following century. "The 'Meisho Zûye,'" says Dr. Anderson,[1] "indicates all the spots famous for landscape beauties, collects learned records of the historical and legendary lore of the localities described, enu-

[1] Portfolio monograph, "Japanese Wood Engraving," 1895, p. 43.

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VIEW NEAR KYOTO.

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merates the various objects of curiosity or archæological importance preserved in the neighbourhood, contributes scientific notes upon the flora and fauna of the district, and opens a fund of practical information as to industries, commerce, and a hundred other matters of interest both to visitors and residents." These little books, often published in series of as many as twenty volumes, are illustrated by clever woodcuts. At p. 142 is a typical example from the "Miyako Meisho Zuye," compiled by Akisato Sōseki, and illustrated by Takehara Shunchōsai, one of the best artists who devoted himself to this class of art. It was published at Kyōto in 1780. In the nineteenth century Hasegawa Settan (*c.* 1837) and Hanzan Yasunobu (*c.* 1859) also distinguished themselves in illustrations of landscape.

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CHAPTER IX.

TECHNIQUE.

THE technique of wood-cutting for book illustration and colour-printing in Japan forms an important study, and a proper understanding of it is essential to any adequate criticism of its results—more so indeed, for reasons which will appear, than in the case of other arts. The following account is based mainly on the authoritative report prepared by Mons. T. Tokuno (Chief of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing of the Ministry of Finance, Tōkyō), to illustrate a set of tools and materials deposited in the U. S. National Museum at Washington.[1]

The first point of importance is the choice of wood. That most generally used is a species of cherry—the "sakura"—which gives a grain of peculiar fineness and hardness. From this, planks are cut and planed to a smooth surface in the ordinary manner; Japanese wood-cutters invariably using a surface parallel *with* the grain, as did Dürer and the early European engravers,

[1] Smithsonian Report, U.S. National Museum, 1892, p. 221.

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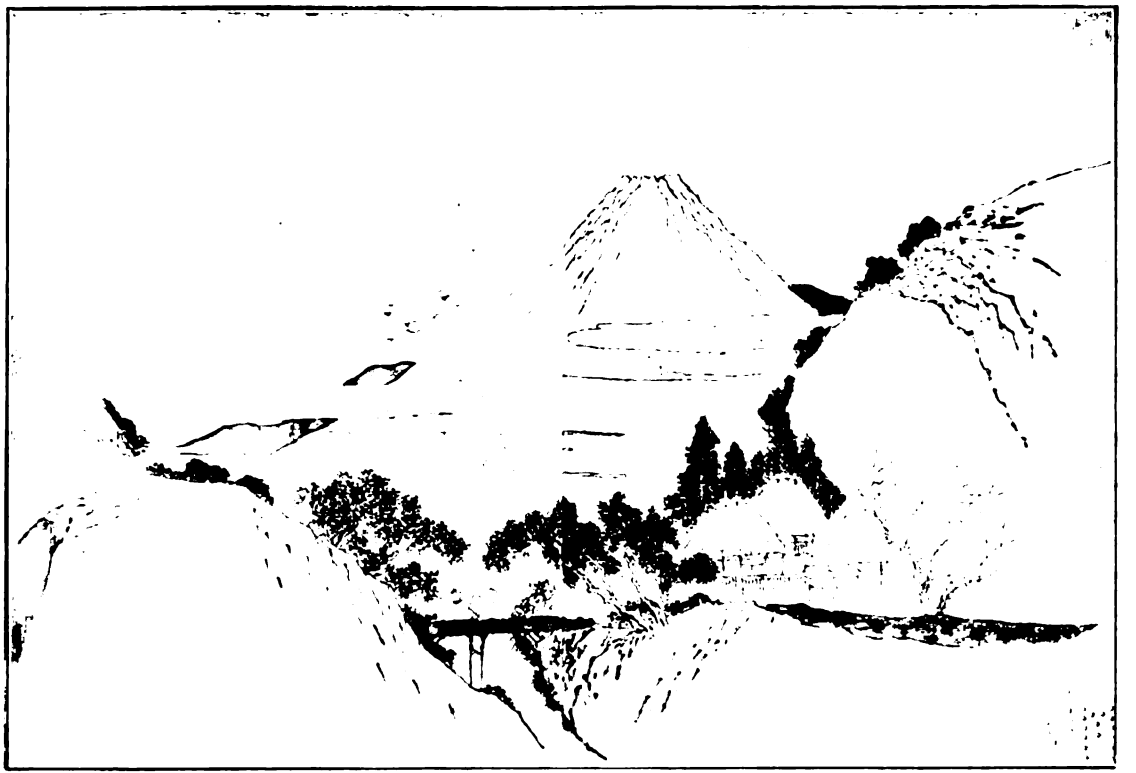

LANDSCAPE WITH VIEW OF MOUNT FUJI.

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instead of following our modern practice of cutting *across* it.

The design is drawn with a brush on thin semi-transparent paper (*minogami* or *gampishi*), and pasted, face downwards, on the block, in order to avoid the difficulty of reversal. If it is not now clearly visible, the paper is either oiled or carefully scraped away until every line is distinct and unmistakable. The outline is then cut completely with a knife, held in the right hand and guided with the left; when this operation is finished, the superfluous wood is removed by means of a series of straight- and curved-edged chisels not differing essentially from those used by European carpenters. Incidentally it may be remarked, that this method results necessarily in the destruction of the design; a fact which should cause collectors to look with care and suspicion on the so-called "originals" of well-known prints, occasionally offered to the confiding and enthusiastic amateur; who must also be cautioned against the alleged "proof"—a state which simply does not exist.

Where an impression in black and white only is desired, the block is now ready for use. If, however, a print in more than one colour is to be made, further steps are necessary. Speaking generally—the exceptions are very questionable and too few to be of importance—a separate block has to be made for each printing proposed. For

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this purpose the designer will have prepared additional "pulls," indicating on each the extent of the single colour to be printed therefrom; and the engraver—almost always, be it noted, another individual—executes a series of blocks accordingly: sometimes carrying out two or three on the same plank; and even, for the sake of economy, on opposite sides of it.

M. Tokuno states that the chief difference between the ancient and modern styles of wood-cutting lies in the comparative shallowness of the latter, and the fact that it is no longer the custom to begin by deeply incising the outlines. This may certainly account for much of the sacrifice of vigour to mere prettiness noticeable in the work of the present day.

There now remains for consideration the method of printing,[1] an operation always performed by a third individual. The block—whether one or more colours is to be used matters not at all, since each involves a separate operation—the block is prepared by loading it with the dry pigment, over which a little rice paste is sprinkled. This colour is then mixed and adjusted, *on the block*, with a brush similar in shape to those used by whitewashers (p. 122), also well loaded with rice paste; the use of the latter

[1] A useful account is given in "Japan in Art and Industry," by F. Régamey English translation by M. F., and E. L. Sheldon. London: Saxon and Co., 1893.

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HOSAI

MOUNTAIN SCENERY.

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being not only to fix the colours, but also to give them additional brilliancy. The paper —tough mulberry-bark paper of wonderful quality—is damped, with a flat brush, to a degree fixed by the skill of the craftsman, neither more nor less, and laid over the *upper* surface of the block, when the impression is rubbed off with a movement (alternating upwards from right to left) of the *baren*, an instrument consisting of a disc of twisted cord, fitted into a socket of paper and cloth, and inclosed in a sheath of bamboo leaf, the ends of which are tightly drawn and twisted together at the back to form a handle. Our illustration [1] at p. 122 shows the whole process of making colour-prints, the places of the craftsmen being taken by women.

There are certain obvious difficulties in printing by this process which should not be ignored, although they cannot be explained away. Artists in England who, with the clearest and fullest information, have tried to obtain similar effects, find an obstacle in the tendency of the colours to run. The only cure for the evil lies in the hands of the skilled craftsman, who intuitively knows the exact amount of moisture his paper should carry, and the precise proportion of rice paste to mix with his colour. Again, there is the difficulty of register. And again all that can be said is

[1] From a print in the collection of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

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that the Japanese eye and hand require no more formidable device than a cross at one corner of the block, and a boundary line at the other. It is a little disappointing perhaps to our pride to find that we are so hopelessly inferior in mere manual dexterity; but the loss of whatever we once had is the price Nature has exacted for the insult of our machines and "labour-saving" appliances.

With regard to materials there is little more to be said. The paper, as already indicated, is—or was—a domestic manufacture from the inner bark of a species of mulberry, cultivated for the purpose, and cut in the "withy" state.[1] Its extreme toughness and evenness of texture fits it peculiarly for the process of printing to which it is submitted; while a high absorbent power is no mean factor in the practicability of that process; and is very largely answerable for the exquisite tone and quality of tint produced. The colours are for the most part the mineral or vegetable substances well-known to ourselves; but one or two quaint customs in connection with them may be indicated. Thus, the rare and beautiful blue found on old prints was obtained by recovering the colour from rags dyed with indigo; and also a pink (*shojen-ji*), thought to be cochineal, was imported from China in "the form of cotton felt dyed

[1] An excellent and easily accessible account of the process will be found in the "Consular Reports," Japan, 1871.

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red" (Tokuno). The colour again had to be extracted. M. Tokuno also tells us that the Japanese printers pride themselves on

YEITAKU SENSAI. A WRITING LESSON, 1880-82.

the difficulty of properly preparing their colours, and on the skill requisite for success.

It will have been seen that the colours are thus sufficiently identical with our water-

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colours—rice paste or a little glue solution taking the place of the gum or sugar used by European manufacturers; and the actual mixing being an integral part of the final process of use, instead of a preparatory operation.

In some of the colour-prints, and most of the *surimono*, a method of *gauffrage*, or dry printing, is very effectively used. For this purpose a block must be engraved with the special design to be embossed, which is rubbed off, or sometimes, perhaps, impressed in its proper sequence. This embossing is so thoroughly done that it is not uncommon to find prints which still retain a considerable amount of relief, even after an interval of a century.

The technique of the *surimono*, indeed, is in all the earlier examples of surpassing excellence. On these little prints—commemorative of a feast, the New Year, or an incident in the life of the artist or his patron, such as a change of name or the adoption of a son—every care possible was ungrudgingly taken. They are, as a rule, small in size, rarely exceeding six inches in their greatest dimension; and in treatment they seem to have developed a quite different style, due doubtless to superior delicacy in the processes used. As a rule the effects are obtained by a greater precision and fineness of line than in the broadsheets, by a brilliancy of colour, and by a lavish use of metallic lustres,

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SURIMONO.

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gold, silver, and bronze, which lead one to compare them in some degree with the work of the old European miniaturists; an analogy, however, which must clearly be understood as applying only in the case of certain resemblances of technique, and by no means in the matter of treatment or choice of subject.

As to this latter, we may shortly say here that it covers ground widely different from the broadsheets; it is treated of at greater length in Chapter X., which deals with the general question.

The school of artists who worked at Osaka from the early part of the nineteenth century made use of a technique resembling that of the *surimono*, so far as the brilliancy of colour and liberal use of metals is concerned. Much of their work is of high excellence as printing, and, as such, has scarcely yet received the attention it undoubtedly deserves at the hands of European collectors.

A short notice may be fitly inserted in this place of the manufacture of that crape-paper which adds so much to the appearance of otherwise often inferior prints, and has been used with excellent effect in the compilations of fairy tales lately common in England. The process is fully described by Rein,[1] and can be summarized as follows:

[1] REIN, J. J. "The Industries of Japan," 1889, p. 408.

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The already printed sheets are damped, and tied round a fixed cylinder, on which a movable collar is worked by a lever in such a manner as to compress the edges. After each such operation the sheets are untied, and re-arranged in positions relatively to each other, which differ systematically, the whole process being repeated until the paper has been thus treated at practically every possible angle. The result is, in the case of a colour-print, a curiously accurate reduction, the extent of which can be easily estimated by the simple experiment of soaking the print in water and then applying a squegee. If the paper is good it will be restored very nearly to its original dimensions.

The making-up of a Japanese book differs so widely from the European practice as to merit a short notice. So far as the illustrations are concerned, the technique is practically the same as that of the broadsheets; but a curious custom exists of cutting the two halves of a double-page illustration on the halves of separate blocks; each sheet being thus printed with portions of two designs. The sheets are folded in the middle, and stitched at the edges, instead of, as with us, at the folds; so that the divided design comes naturally into its place on either side of the middle of the open book. An advantage is thus gained which may afford a reason for the procedure, each leaf

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A VIEW OF

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MOUNT FUJI.

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being doubled, and fraying and dog's-earing to a great degree prevented. The process also allows of a custom in use in Japan, and much to be recommended to European collectors, of inserting a slip of paper in each fold, with much gain of strength and increase of brilliancy in effect.

The colours used in the old books are, as a rule, fewer, and applied with greater simplicity, than is the case with the broadsheets; although some of the finer examples by Shunshō, Masayoshi, Utamaro, and Toyokuni I. leave nothing to be desired in this respect. A favourite combination at the beginning of this century was of pale blue and a peculiarly brilliant red, which is quite characteristic of the period. Unfortunately, the latter has a tendency to discoloration, and few specimens remain at the present day which do not show traces of deterioration.

A full consideration of the technique of Japanese woodcuts is of such enormous importance in arriving at a critical estimate of their value, that it may, perhaps, be convenient in this place to offer some suggestions as to their peculiar artistic qualities. And, as everything that can be said for or against the book illustrations must, speaking generally, be covered by the case for the colour-prints, it will also be convenient to discuss the latter alone.

The greatest difficulty the art critic or amateur of Western training finds in these

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productions is that of accepting their conventions. He has only occasionally—and that as a matter of fashion—succeeded in taking the technical qualities of an art into account in his reasonings. As a rule he demands from the sculptor, the painter, the engraver, the wood-cutter, just that unintelligent, pseudo-realism which the decadence of the Renaissance invented to please his forefathers. And it really is worth while asking whether a person who demands light and shade, modelling, or minutiæ of form, from a craft only capable of strong line and flat mass of colour, is on a very much higher artistic level than the Indian potentate, who was sad because his full-face portrait did not do justice to the magnificence of the robes on his back.

Now the Japanese as a nation seem to have a very finely developed appreciation of beauty in the abstract. They have attained to a higher level altogether than that of the average European, who demands in his art the easily recognizable incidents and objects of his every-day life, or a more or less common-place presentment of such historical, classical or legendary scenes, as the artist judiciously selects to flatter the little learning of his *clientèle*. There is nothing in English life, unless it be the annual pilgrimage of the cockney to Bushey Park on Horse-Chestnut Sunday—to compare with the flower festivals of Japan—with the

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KUNISADA

THE PROCESSES OF COLOUR-PRINTING REPRESENTED BY WOMEN.

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keen appreciation of the beauty of snow—with the love, so quaintly expressed in many a folk-tale, of bird and beast — with the consistent reverence for all the charms of Nature.

Bearing this in mind it becomes more easy to understand the perfection and thoroughness which decorative art has attained in Japan. The nation has gone beyond first principles; and without losing its taste for realism has developed one for convention. Or perhaps it would be more correct to say that, with that magnificent common-sense which sometimes strikes us so quaintly and unexpectedly in things Japanese, it has realized the limitations of its arts, and chosen that its craftsmen should not overstrain their strength. *For the Japanese artist rarely fails: he knows his limits too well.*

It is, however, a little difficult to account for the pleasure these colour-prints give, especially to literary men; but perhaps a solution may be found in this very completeness of their limitations. They appeal solely to the physical sense of beauty. No moral is inculcated, rarely is found even an attempt at the telling of a tale; but the eye is gratified with the perfection of harmonious lines; with an unexpected but convincing scheme of pleasant colour. A European picture too often invites criticism—it disturbs with a moral or overwhelms with a

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sermon. It oppresses with a sense of mastery, or irritates with the evidence of failure. The artist's personality is either too prominent for unphilosophic nature to willingly admit; or too flagrantly absent for even charitable excuse. The aim, in short, is always either too high or too low, and the weapon rarely understood, or managed with care and restraint.

But in the best of the *nishiki-ye* we find none of these distractions. No attempt is made to represent anything incapable of expression in clean-cut lines and flat masses of colour,—the only language of which the technique of colour-printing with wood-cuts is perfectly capable. The result is an abstraction—unreal, but charming as a fairy-tale; and, like that, outside all rational criticism. One can look at it and rest; without exciting either for good or evil the emotions in any way whatsoever. And in these days of mental introspection and unending emotional torture, that is a blessing too great to be lightly esteemed, or accounted as a thing of little worth.

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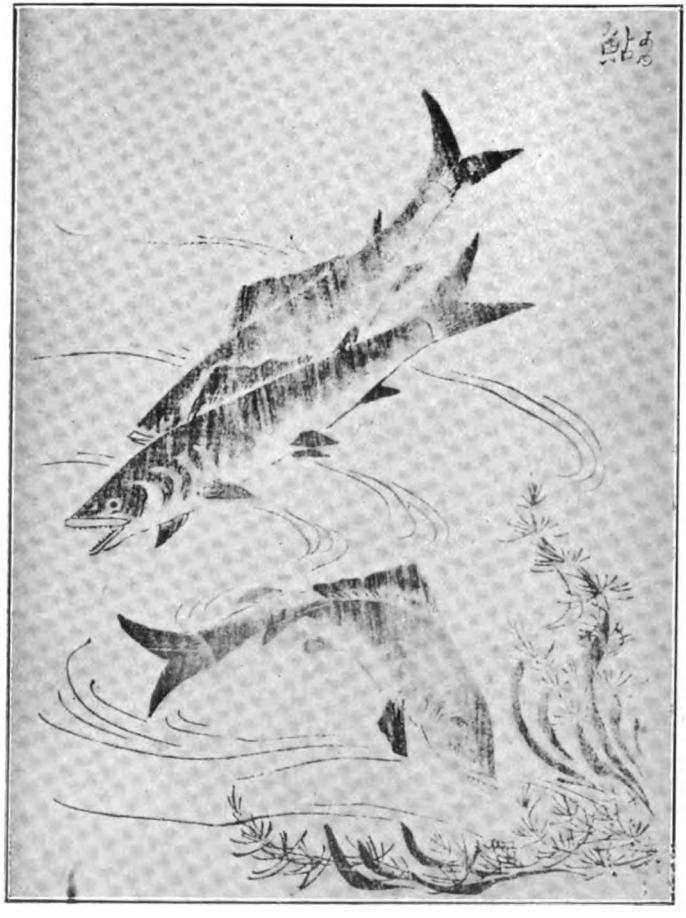
HAKUSHU



STUDIES OF FISH.

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CHAPTER X.

SOME SUBJECTS OF ILLUSTRATION.

THE first point of interest which strikes the collector of Japanese colour-prints is generally the preponderance of dramatic subjects. The artists seemed never to tire of these; portraits of actors, theatrical characters in costume, scenes of famous plays, occur in such profusion as to show with unmistakable force the universality of the love for the drama among the lower orders of Japan. So long ago as in 1695 it is recorded that portraits of the famous actor Ichikawa Danjiuro were sold in the streets of Yedo, and although during the first half of the eighteenth century the number of prints of this nature was not excessive, Shunshō, and especially his follower Toyokuni I., revived the taste, and by their skill gave to it a lasting impetus.

This is not the place in which to enter on a prolonged consideration of the Japanese drama; but a few of its characteristics may

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be indicated as having a direct bearing on our subject. The dramatists generally chose for their plays the historical or legendary romances with which the literature of Japan abounds. They treated them at great length; but in the matter of accessories they were limited by many conventions. Thus, for the famous plays, certain costumes and scenery were traditional, and could on no account be seriously varied, while the "make-up" of the actors was prescribed by no less rigid rules. This will account for much of the apparent lack of individuality in the portraiture of stage heroes; that it is due to no want of skill on the part of the artist is shown by two well-known views[1] of a theatre interior by Toyokuni I., in which the varying expressions of the audience are rendered in masterly fashion.

Another noteworthy fact is that all female parts were formerly played by men; and that the so-called representations of "actresses" are really, therefore, of male actors only.

In the early prints of theatrical subjects, the display of stage accessories is very slight, a deficiency compensated for by the fine dramatic force with which the passions of the characters are generally depicted. But in the more elaborate broadsheets of the nineteenth century the scenery is given

[1] In the collection at the National Art Library.

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BUDDHIST ANGEL IN THE FEATHER ROBE (HIGOROMO).

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in detail, and often includes very charming bits of landscape. It was sometimes the case, indeed, that famous theatrical scenes or characters were in this way arbitrarily associated with well-known views; for example, a set of dramatic characters, each with one of the fifty-three "Views of the Tōkaidō," by Kunisada, may be referred to.

Although the drama was so popular in Japan, it is curious to note that every one connected with it lay under a certain social stigma. An actor might be—often was—the idol of the population, who went to extravagant lengths in their adulation of him. But this was only on the stage; as a citizen he ranked lower far than the artisans who patronised him; and the meanness of his social position extended even to the artists who devoted themselves to illustrations of the stage. A noteworthy incident arising from this cause has already been set out in the account of the rivalry of Utamaro and Toyokuni. A story of similar import is related of Hokusai. Onoye Baikō, a great actor of the period, was desirous of obtaining a design from the already famous pen of the artist, whom he invited to call on him for the purpose. This Hokusai steadily refrained from doing. The actor then proceeded to visit the artist. He discovered him at work in a room, the floor of which was so dirty that the visitor

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found it necessary to sit on his own cloak in order to make the customary salutations. These Hokusai absolutely ignored, continuing his work impassively until his visitor retired in confusion. Ultimately the actor was compelled to humble himself even more, and only by continued and abject apologies succeeded at last in obtaining what he wanted.

Of the historical scenes the most popular are, perhaps, illustrations of incidents in the great social war between the two leading clans of Japan, the Taira and Minamoto, which culminated in the battle of Dan-no-ura, A.D. 1185. At the fight the army of the former was practically annihilated, and to this day the bay is said to be haunted by the ghosts of the defeated Taira. In this battle the Minamoto were commanded by Yoshitsune, the favourite hero of Japanese historical romance; and he also forms the central figure in many of the colour-prints.

The early history of Yoshitsune [1] is bound up with that of the two great contending families, who entangled the whole empire in their struggle for supremacy during the twelfth century, furnishing a curious analogy with our own Wars of the Roses even to the colours of the badges; for that of the Taira was red, while the Minamoto, ultimately

[1] A full account of the history of this period is in GRIFFIS, "The Mikado's Empire," p. 124, etc.

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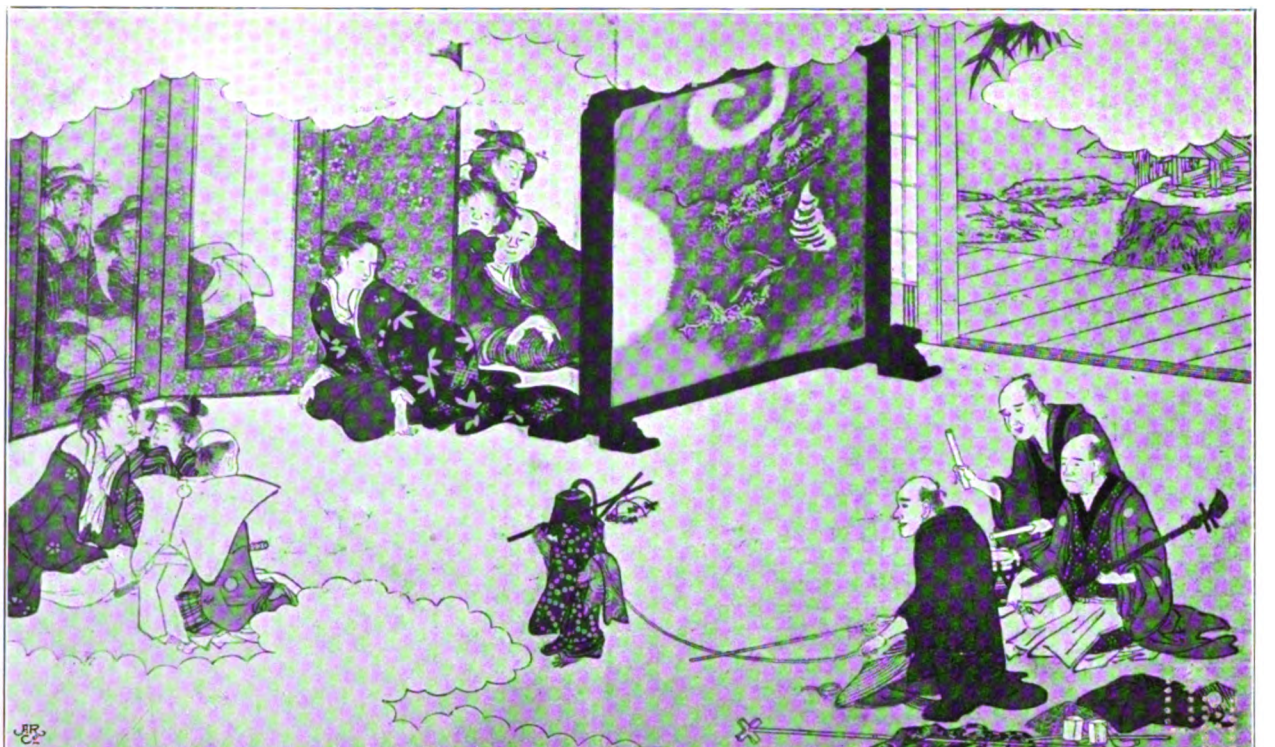

STREET PERFORMERS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY.

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victorious, fought under a white banner. We can but afford space for a bare mention of the incidents of Yoshitsune's life; the flight of his mother, Tokiwa, in snow-time, to escape the vengeance of Kiyomori, the great Taira leader, and then practically ruler of the land; Tokiwa's pleadings with Kiyomori to save the lives of her sons, and her self-sacrifice; Yoshitsune's exploits as a boy; his legendary education in military exercises by the *Tengu*, half bird, half human; the victorious uprising led by his brother Yoritomo and himself; the subsequent quarrel between the brothers, and escape of Yoshitsune: all these are figured over and over again by Japanese artists. Then we have a fresh sequence:—the fight on Gōjō Bridge between Yoshitsune and the giant Benkei, whom he overcame by his skill in fencing, thereby gaining the faithful retainer from whom he was henceforth inseparable; their wonderful adventures;[1] the death of Benkei, and betrayal of Yoshitsune.

Earlier and more fantastic are the legends which have grown around the history of Minamoto-no Yorimitsu (Raikō), a noble of the tenth or eleventh century. These also are frequently met with in the colour-prints, especially the "Story of the Giant Spider" —surely the most terrible creation of the imagination of any people—and the slaying

[1] See ANDERSON, Brit. Museum Catalogue of Chinese and Japanese Paintings, p. 117, etc.

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of Shiuten-Doji, the "drunkard boy" and his horde of demons.[1]

Other subjects, or classes of subjects, dealt with are very few. Popular actors—in both male and female parts—famous beauties of the Yoshiwara, and singing girls—scenes from successful plays. These cover all the ground of the earlier and best periods. Then comes the epoch of landscape and of battle-scene; the illustration of the "Adventures of Prince Gengi," a romance of the tenth century, and of that great epic of the *samurai*, the "Devotion of the Forty-seven Rōnin." This famous story, although too long to be given here, calls for a few words of comment, so frequently does it occur in the pictorial art of the common folk of Japan. The tale has been charmingly told by Mr. Mitford,[2] and also by Mr. F. V. Dickins;[3] but each of these writers has drawn from the romances—the first from a story-book, the second from a drama. Now the whole incident is a matter of historical fact which occurred in 1701-2, and it rests on unimpeachable evidence and existing documents. These have been thoroughly sifted by Mr. Shigeno, Professor of History in the Imperial University of Japan, and a convenient summary

[1] See ANDERSON, Brit. Museum Catalogue of Chinese and Japanese Paintings, p. 109, etc.
[2] MITFORD, "Tales of Old Japan."
[3] DICKINS, "Chiushingura."

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THE DRAMA OF THE FORTY-SEVEN RŌNIN. SCENE VIII.

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has been published by Mr. James Murdoch.[1] At the same time it is to be distinctly understood that most of the scenes are not those of the story, but of one or other of the many dramas founded thereon, in which the names are altered and the action carried back to the fourteenth century. A convenient English translation of the second and most popular of the dramas was published at Tōkyō by the Hakubunkwan in 1894. This play has (in the original) twelve scenes, and the broadsheets dealing with the subject are, as a rule, of that number; the famous incidents being represented with little variation.

In addition to the scenes—which, by the way, are frequently burlesqued in the most grotesque manner—sets of portraits of the Rōnin are often met with. Prints dealing with these subjects will generally be easily recognized by the uniform of the characters, their robes having long indentations, generally of black, but sometimes of red or brown, and white.

Other favourite subjects of the broadsheets are series of representations of the amusements or occupations of women at different seasons of the year, and included in this category are themes which give rise to some of the most beautiful effects obtained by the later artists. The unaffected

[1] MURDOCH, "Scenes from the Chiushingura." Tōkyō, 1892.

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love of the Japanese for the beauties of nature is among their most striking characteristics; and one of the forms of its expression consists in the holding of annual holidays for the express purpose of admiring the blossom of cherry or plum-tree, or other seasonable attraction. These excursions have furnished occasion for almost countless compositions by Yeisen, Kunisada, Kuniyoshi, and other artists of their time.

Representations of children are not met with so often as might be expected. The three artists above mentioned have, however, each made some charming sets of games of the young folk, and among Kiyonaga's most successful work is a set of delightful designs of a similar nature.

The landscapes have already been dealt with in the chapter devoted to that subject. Compositions of animal or plant form are rarely met with but in book form, noteworthy exceptions being a set of birds by Utamaro, and of fishes by Hiroshige I., each engraved and published quite in the manner of the broadsheets.

Some of the later artists devoted themselves to battle-scenes and military processions; the specific subjects being generally taken from the expedition of the Empress Jingō to the Korea in the third century; that of Katō Kiyomasa and Konishi to the same country under Hideyoshi in the sixteenth century, and the wars of the Taira and

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Minamoto to which allusion has already been made.

These scenes, which often run to five or

CHILDREN AT PLAY (EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY).

even seven sheets in one design, are quaintly but effectively put together. The detail is crude, and, as a rule, of little merit, but the colours are often judiciously used, and the

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general lines of the composition arranged with telling result.

Before leaving the subject of the broadsheets finally, it will be well to point out the circumstances which have so restricted the subjects dealt with. It will have been noticed that these centre almost entirely round Yedo, the *de facto* capital of Japan under the Shogunate. The actors, women, scenes, are nearly all those of the military metropolis and of its neighbourhood, so that representations of them were even known as *Yedo-ye* (Yedo pictures). The fashion was set by the lower *samurai* and other vassals of the high nobles who made their periodical visits to the court of the Shogun. For their especial benefit many of the broadsheets were produced, and were purchased by visitors to the great city for the decoration of their provincial homes, and the gratification of friends and relations afar off.

The *surimono* demand a passing note. In the first place, it is necessary to correct the widespread mistake that these dainty works of art were invariably produced as New Year's cards. On the contrary, it must be clearly understood that they were issued on any occasion which seemed to call for some special distinction in the form of announcement or congratulation. An instance of a concert ticket has already been given. Other examples may be quoted,

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SURIMONO: PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN.

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for instance, Nihō made a *surimono* for a man, to announce the latter's recovery from a temporary blindness; Giokuyen designed one for an actor who wished to inform his patrons that he had adopted a son and given him his name; while the common and, to the collector, most irritating practice of assuming pseudonyms has its sole redeeming feature in the number of *surimono* which it has called into existence.

The subjects of design of the latter are, as a rule, more fanciful, more allusive, than those of the broadsheets. Scenes from folk-tales, birds and flowers of good omen, the Seven Gods of Good Fortune, and their ship, even a few domestic implements, or instruments of music, serve to make a composition, completed by a most judiciously placed inscription, and generally accompanied by a poem.

M. de Goncourt has made a *catalogue raisonné* of the *surimono* of Hokusai. They demand, as a whole, a special study, both on account of their intrinsic merit and for the reason that their copious inscriptions doubtless hide many biographical facts of importance. As our sources of information increase, no doubt this branch of Japanese art will also be opened to us with much gain to our knowledge.

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LANDSCAPE. BY TAKEHARA SHUNCHŌSAI, 1780.

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ARTISTS' NAMES WITH CHINESE CHARACTERS.

An-dō 安藤
Ashi-hiro 芦廣
Ashi-kiyo 芦清
Ashi-kuni 芦國
Ashi-maro 芦麿
Ashi-yu-ki 芦湯氣

Bai-chō-rō 梅朝樓
Bai-koku (or Ume - kuni) 梅國
Bai-rei 梅嶺
Boku-sen 墨仙
Bum-pō 文鳳
Bun-chō (Ippitsusai) 文調
Bun-chō (Tani) 文晁
Bun-rei 文嶺

Chika-maro 周麿
Chika-nobu 周延
Chō-bun-sai 鳥文齋
Chō-ka-rō 朝香樓
Chō-ki 長喜
Chō-shun 長春
Chō-wō-rō 朝鸚樓

Fuji-mura 藤村
Fusa-nobu 房信
Fusa-tane 房種

Gaku-tei 岳亭
Gen-shi-rō 玄四郎
Gen-ye-i-mon 源右衛門
Ges-shō 月樵
Gioku-ran-sai 玉蘭齋
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Go-chō-tei 五蝶亭
Go-fū-tei 五風亭
Gō-kan 江鑑
Go-ki-tei 五龜亭
Go-raku-sai 五樂齋
Go-sō-tei 五素亭
Go-tō-tei 五渡亭
Go-un-tei 五雲亭
Gum-ba-tei 郡馬亭
Gwa-chō-ken 画蝶軒
Gwa-jiū-ken 画壽軒
Gwa-ko-ken 画好軒

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Gyoku-ran-tei 玉藍亭

Hachi-ye-i-mon 八右衛門
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Hana-gawa-tei 花川亭
Han-zan 半山
Haru-kawa 春川
Haru-nobu 春信
Haru-ye 春石
Ha-se-gawa 長谷川
Hide-kuni 英國
Hide-maro 秀麿
Hide-teru 秀輝
Hiko-kuni 彦國
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Hoku-ga 北雄
Hoku-jiu 北壽
Hoku-mei 北明
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Hoku-sai 北齋
Hoku-sei 北而
Hoku-shiū 北洲
Hoku-tō 北樹
Hoku-tsui 北若
Hoku-un 北雲
Hoku-yei 北英
Hō-nen (or Yoshi-toshi) 芳年
Hoso-i 細井

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Ichi-ō-sai 一櫻齋
Ichi-riu-sai 一立齋
Ichi-yei-sai 一英齋
Ichi-yū-sai (Kuni-yoshi) 一雄齋
Ichi-yū-sai (Kuni-teru) 一勇齋
Ik-kei-sai 一惠齋
Ik-kō-sai 一光齋
I-no-uye 井上
Ip-pitsu-sai 一筆齋
Ip-pō-sai 一鳳齋
I-sai 爲齋
Ishi-da 石田
Ishi-kawa 石川
Ishi-wara 石原
It-chō 一蝶

Ji-he-i 治兵衛

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Ka-chō-rō 香朝樓
Kage-toshi 景年
Ka-kō 霞湖
Kana-maro 叮麿
Ka-no 狩野
Katsu-gawa 勝川
Katsu-shika 葛飾
Kawa-nabe 河鍋
Kei-gaku 圭岳
Kei-sai (Masayoshi) 蕙齋
Kei-sai (Yeisen) 渓齋
Kiku-chi 菊地
Kiku-gawa 菊川
Kin-chō-rō 錦朝樓
Kio-den 京傳
Kiō-sai 曉齋
Kita-gawa 北川
Kita-wo 北尾
Kiyo-haru 清春
Kiyo-hiro 清廣
Kiyo-masu 清倍
Kiyo-mine 清峯
Kiyo-mitsu 清滿
Kiyo-naga 清長
Kiyo-nobu 清信
Kiyo-sada 清貞
Kiyo-shige 清重
Kiyo-tani 清谷
Kiyo-tsune 清經
Kō-chō 公長
Kō-chō-rō 香朝樓
Kō-rin 光琳
Ko-riū-sai 湖龍齋
Kō-sai 紅齋
Ko-sui-sai 紅翠齋
Kuni-aki 國朋
Kuni-chika 國周
Kuni-haru 國春
Kuni-hiko 國彦
Kuni-hiro 國廣
Kuni-hisa 國之
Kuni-kage 國景
Kuni-kane 國兼
Kuni-kazu 國員
Kuni-kiyo 國清
Kuni-maro 國麿
Kuni-maru 國丸
Kuni-masa 國政
Kuni-masu 國升
Kuni-mitsu 國滿
Kuni-mori 國盛
Kuni-mune 國宗
Kuni-naga 國長
Kuni-nawo 國直
Kuni-nori 國周
Kuni-sada 國貞
Kuni-sato 國郷
Kuni-shige 國重
Kuni-taka 國表
Kuni-teru 國輝
Kuni-tomi 國富
Kuni-tomo 國乃
Kuni-tora 國虎
Kuni-tsuna 國綱

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Kuni-yasu 國安
Kuni-yoshi 國芳
Kuni-yuki 國湯氣
Kwan-getsu 寒月

Man-wō 十翁
Masa-nobu (Kita-wo) 政演
Masa-nobu (Okumura) 政信
Masa-yoshi 政義
Ma-tora 眞虎
Matsu-go-rō 松五郎
Matsu-kawa 杭川
Matsu-shima 松嶋
Mitsu-nobu 光信
Miya-gawa 宮川
Mori 森
Mori-kuni 守國
Mori-nobu 盛信
Mori-yoshi 守義
Moro-fusa 師房
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Moro-nobu 師宣
Mune-hiro 宗廣
Mura-kami 村上

Nan-gaku 南嶽
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Nihō 二鳳
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Nishi-yama 西山

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Nobu-hiro 信廣
Nobu-shige 信重
Nori-fusa 完房

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Ō-kiō 應擧
Ō-sai 櫻齋
Oku-mura 奥村

Ritsu-sen-sai 立川齋
Riyo-un 旅雲
Roku-zaye-i-mon 六允衛門
Rōren 老蓮
Ryū-koku 柳國
Ryū-kō-sai 立好齋
Ryū-sai 柳齋
Ryū-sen 立宣

Sada-fusa 貞房
Sada-hide 貞秀
Sada-hiro 貞廣
Sada-kage 貞景
Sada-katsu 貞景
Sada-masa 貞政
Sada-masu 貞舛
Sada-nobu 貞信
Sada-oka 貞岡

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Sada-yuki 貞雪
Sai-tō 載斗
Sei-tei 省亭
Sei-zō 清藏
Seki-yen 石燕
Sek-kiō 雪喬
Sen-chō 泉晁
Sen-kwa-dō 仙花堂
Sen-sai 鮮齋
Sess-shiū-sai 雪焦齋
Set-tan 雪旦
Set-tei 雪汀
Sha-raku 鴈樂
Shiba-kuni 玄國
Shige-haru 重春
Shige-masa 重政
Shige-mitsu 重滿
Shige-naga 重長
Shige-nobu (Yanagawa) 重信
Shige-yama 重山
Shikō 子興
Shin-sai 田齋
Shō-kwa-dō 松花堂
Shun-boku 春卜
Shun-chō 春朝
Shun-chō-sai 春潮齋
Shun-dō 春童
Shun-gyoku 春玉
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Shun-kō-sai 春江齋
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Shun-rō 春郎
Shun-sei 春成
Shun-sen 春扇
Shun-shi 春芝
Shun-shō 春章
Shun-sho-sai 春曾齋
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Shun-yō 春楊
Shun-zan 春山
Sō-gaku 嵩岳
Sō-ri 宗理
Sugi-ta 杉田
Suke-nobu 祐信
Suzu-ki 鈴木

Tada-chika 忠近
Take-hara 竹原
Tame-kadzu 爲一
Tami-kuni 民國
Tan-ge 丹下
Tan-i 探意
Tan-yū 探幽

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Tei-sai 貞齋
Teru-yuki (or Yeishi) 榮之
Toki-ta-rō 時太郎
Tome-kichi 留吉
Tomi-kawa 富川
Tomi-nobu 富信
Tori-i 鳥居
Tori-yama 鳥山
Toshi-kuni 利國
Toshi-mitsu (or Shun-man) 俊滿
To-shiū-sai 東洲齋
Tō-un 等雲
Tō-yei 東英
Toyo-fusa 豐房
Toyo-haru 豐春
Toyo-hide 豐秀
Toyo-hiro 豐廣
Toyo-hisa 豐之
Toyo-kawa 豐川
Toyo-kiyo 豐清
Toyo-kuni 豐國
Toyo-masa 豐雅
Toyo-nobu 豐言
Toyo-shige 豐重
Tō-yū 洞都
Tō-zabu-rō 籐三郎
Tsuki-maro 月麿
Tsuki-oka 月岡

Ume-kuni (or Bai-koku) 梅國

Um-pō 雲峰
Un-gwa 雲峨
Uta-gawa 歌川
Uta-maro 哥麿
Uta-yama 歌山
Uye-mura 上村

Watana-be 渡邊

Yama-guchi 山口
Yama-moto 山本
Yama-naka 山中
Yana-gawa 柳川
Yanagi-ya 柳谷
Ya-shima 矢嶋
Yasu-go-rō 安五都
Yasu-kuni 保國
Yasu-nobu 安信
Yei-haku 永伯
Yei-sai 英齋
Yei-sen 英泉
Yei-shi 榮之
Yei-shin 英信
Yei-shō 英勝
Yei-shun 英春
Yei-taku 永濯
Yei-zan 英山
Ye-kawa 江川
Yen-chō 豐長
Yen-ki 遠喜

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Yō-sai 容齋
Yoshi-chika 芳設
Yoshi-fuji 芳藤
Yoshi-fusa 芳孚
Yoshi-haru 芳春
Yoshi-hisa 芳之
Yoshi-kado 芳兼
Yoshi-kazu 芳員
Yoshi-ki 芦幾
Yoshi-kuni 芦圖
Yoshi-maru 義丸
Yoshi-mori 芳盛
Yoshi-mune 芳宗
Yoshi-nobu 義信
Yoshi-shige 芳重
Yoshi-tada 芳迚
Yoshi-taki 芳瀧
Yoshi-tora 芳虎
Yoshi-toshi (or Hōnen) 芳年
Yoshi-toyo 芳豐
Yoshi-tsuna 芳綱
Yoshi-tsuru 芳鶴
Yoshi-tsuya 芳艷
Yō-shiū 楊洲
Yoshi-yuki 芳幸

Zen-ye-i-mon 善右衛門

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